

A NEW OUTLOOK

K. M. MUNSHI



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FOREWORD

These reprints of my articles, I hope, will be helpful to the students of Modern India in appreciating the points of view for which I have laboured now for several years.

I am a nationalist ; my views are inspired by a desire to see India great and powerful. And at the same time when disintegration in one form or the other is almost becoming fashionable in some sections of the people in India, it is necessary that those who stand for Indian nationalism should articulate their political convictions with unflinching boldness.

—K.M. MUNSHI

Delhi

Dated : 15-12-46.

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I

THE DEATH-GRIP OF INFLATION

The Sterling Balances and the prevailing inflation in India are the results of the British policy of fighting her wars at India's cost. During the last six years from 1939 to 1945, the British Government in India acquired for World War II the fruits of the labour of 400 million people, toiling all day and half the night. In addition, millions of Indians supplied services to Britain.

In fact, a large portion of the Sterling Balances today represents goods acquired at controlled rates in order to meet the emergency of World War II. These goods were acquired by Britain at a price much below the parity price of the goods in Britain. Control of prices was introduced in India. Was it for India's good? Certainly not. So, Britain for its war and allied purposes acquired goods from us at artificially-controlled low prices and considerable part of them were sold through the quasi-officially conducted U. K. C. C. at very high prices, depriving India of the benefit and enriching Britain to that extent. On the other hand, for our day to day needs we had to pay higher prices for the same goods, in the

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black market. Thus Britain for her war, acquired Indian goods at an artificially-low price since 1943; we had to pay an artificially higher price in order to subsist during a war not exactly our own.

For all these materials and services supplied by India, what has Britain given in exchange? Britain has transferred to Indian ownership about 360 million capital invested by Britain before the war. In addition to this amount, the Reserve Bank of India has received a credit of 1300 million paper Sterlings. The Sterlings in ordinary language I. O. U. Promissory Notes passed by a bankrupt Britain to a starving creditor India.

India was dragged into the war without her consent. She was made to part with men and materials under compulsion. At the same time she was forced to accept I. O. U.s of Britain because debtor Britain is the political master of India.

From 1942 Britain took goods and services against her I. O. U.s and gave us cartloads of Currency Notes. This sent up prices sky-high and produced a false sense of wealth.

During the decade starting from 1930, the deflationary movements had created indebtedness in the country on account of ruinous low prices of farm products. The irony of it was

that the producer had nothing to maintain his staying power. Whatever he had, he gave away in heavy interest charges, in land-revenue and in meeting indirect taxation all of which were based on high price-levels of farm products. Britain took full advantage of this situation.

After World War II began, circumstances became favourable for the Indian farmer. Then he was denied the compensation.

The way in which the indebtedness has been increased is, to say the least, economically unjustifiable and morally scandalous. Britain wanted to foist her Sterling I. O. U.s on India. There were enough Indian princes, zamindars, bankers, capitalists and industrialists who live on Britain's support who could have been forced to take up Sterling loans. But Britain took advantage of an innocent provision of the Reserve Bank of India Act by issuing Paper Currency against Sterling Securities. The British Government used this legal device to such an extent that the Sterling Securities against Currency aggregated to Rs. 1,135 crores. Cost of living went up ; people were starved. This is the Government that now wants to mobilise moral indignation of the uninformed against the middle and upper classes in India who happened to hold high denomination Notes.

When and how will this debt be paid ?

At the time of the Round Table Conference,

India was indebted to Britain. Britain was the creditor. And as a creditor, it demanded manifold commercial safeguards against India. Now that Britain is indebted to India, there is no suggestion of any safeguard in the interest of India against Britain. On the contrary, there is the talk of scaling down Britain's indebtedness.

If might is right, this is right.

If justice and fairplay between Nations has any meaning, these proposals are a cruel mockery.

It is an iniquitous proposal to scale down Britain's Sterling indebtedness to India. The iniquity is an unjustified use of political domination. Britain, the debtor, so far as India is concerned, has valuable assets in this country as well as abroad. She still holds in India substantial Rupee assets in the form of properties, equities and securities. Why should not these be utilised first to pay Britain's debt? The debtor, the average Briton, is 33 times richer than the creditor, the average Indian. Why should a rich debtor refuse to pay a poor creditor—a creditor whom the debtor has impoverished and whom an accident has placed in an advantageous position?

British Government has been the parent of this gross inflation. This inflation has been

the result of unscrupulous use of an obviously innocent provision of the Reserve Bank of India Act. And, although the War is now over, this provision is being exploited as an instrument for further inflation. Who produces cart-loads of Currency even now ? Why was the potent seed of uncontrollable inflation sown in this country ?

In September 1939, the Currency Notes circulating in India were Rs. 1,82,13,17,000. In the beginning of January 1946, the total of the Currency Notes in circulation had risen to Rs. 12,18,34,58,000. This is an increase of about 600 per cent.

The increase in this Currency circulation is achieved by lodging Sterling Securities and issuing Rupee Notes. On the 2nd of September, 1939, the Sterling Securities were worth Rs. 59,50,11,000. In the beginning of this year, they stand at Rs. 11,20,32,89,000.

Inflation, therefore, is purposely introduced in this country to lend money to Britain against the growing pile of her I. O. U.s. There is any amount of talk about scaling down a substantial portion of this debt but not a finger is raised against this compulsion to use the words of the recent manifesto of Indian economists, 'on a poor famine-stricken country by lending through Currency inflation large sums to a country which is among the richest in the world.'

One would have naturally expected that the first and foremost elementary anti-inflationary measure would be to stop issuing Rupee Notes against I.O.U.s of Britain even at a time when the debtor wants to scale down his indebtedness by virtue of being in military occupation of this country. But the Government of India cannot do anything is so obvious.

II

BRITAIN'S FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC LEGACY

The debt position of India is a cruel commentary on the way in which Britain has administered India's finances. In 1858, the public debt of India was £ 112 millions. By March 1937, it has risen to Rs. 1,208 crores. About 30 per cent. of this debt was held outside India. Out of a total of Rs. 1199·7 crores, 483·1 crores were held in England; 485·87 in India. In addition, there was an unfunded debt of 219·9 crores and a deposit of Rs. 20·82 crores. Thus the total held in India was Rs. 706·6 crores.

In 1941-42, the total public debt was Rs. 1,209 crores, of which 210·7 was external and 998·5 was Indian. In the budget estimate of 1945-46, the total interest-bearing obligation rose to Rs. 2·206 crores against 1·848 crores in 1944-45. Of this debt, Rs. 1,010 crores, are covered by interest-yielding assets. Cash and securities represent Rs. 547 crores. There is a further non-covered debt of Rs. 650 crores as against pre-war figure of Rs. 200 crores.

Soaring Prices.

Index numbers prove the steep rise in wholesale prices. These prices have been 'stabilised' at

about 245. If the base year ended August 1938-39 is taken at 100, the general rate of wholesale prices in October 1944 was 243·4; in October 1945, 244·1 and in January 1946, 250·3.

The industrial and raw materials index shows a similar rise.

The food index shows a similar tendency. If the index for the week ended 26th of August 1939 is equal to 100, the rise has been more than double.

The annual average for 1945 is 235·6 while the index for the week ended 2nd February 1946 indicates 240·4.

Inflation in the hands of a National Government has many advantages; but as operated by Britain it has harmed the man with the fixed income and not benefitted 85 per cent. of the population which depends upon agriculture.

Black Markets.

The indices, however, are misleading. They are calculated on the basis of official prices which are not real. They do not take into account the black markets which have come into existence as a result of shortage of supply and inefficient administration. Most of the commodities, as we all know to our cost, are only to be had at black market prices. The price levels therefore, are very much higher than that what indices indicate.

Britain has in this way walked into an impossible position. Dr. Kumarappa, the well-known economist, has described the Reserve Bank of India as "The Imperial Pawn Shop." I do not like to use such a harsh comparison. But what has the Reserve Bank done ? The Government of India have lent to Britain Sterlings by Currency manipulation, Rs. 1,700 crores at a nominal interest of less than 1 per cent. These 1,700 crores are made up of 1,135 crores Sterling Securities in Issue Department and 542 crores held as balances abroad.

What does the Government of India do ? It borrows money from the public in India at 3 per cent. What would be the state of an ordinary person if he borrowed at 3 per cent. and lent at less than 1 per cent ? It is bad bargain; bad business. It is scarcely suprising ; it is such an immoral deal that the people have no confidence in the loans issued by Government. The *Commerce* of the 26th January, 1946 has the following statement :

"That a very substantial portion of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. 1960 loan must have been taken by the Reserve Bank of India is now clear from an increase of no less than Rs. 8.05 crores in the Bank's own investment portfolio, as disclosed by its statement for the week ended 18th January, 1946. The poor response from the public is also reflected in the rise of over Rs. 10

crores in Notes in circulation in the week in which the list for the new loan opened. It is needless to add that had the public responded to the new loan in large amounts, the expansion in Notes in circulation would not have been so heavy."

Currency Jugglery

Britain, through its agent the Government of India, has caused inflation in this country by the misuse of the power to issue Rupee Currency against Sterling Security given to the Reserve Bank of India. The black marketeer is supplied with tons of paper money. He is no doubt an anti-social criminal, but what about the Government which lavishly provided the means wherewith to carry on his nefarious trade?

The position has become well-nigh impossible.

First, Britain will not pay the large Sterling Debt.

Secondly, if it does not pay, it would lead to extreme bitterness between Britain and India.

Thirdly, if in exchange for this Sterling Debt Britain dumps unwanted and uneconomic manufactured goods, India's industrial development would be thwarted for a century.

Fourthly, if the Sterling Debt is scaled down without setting off the 600 crores of Britain's

Rupee assets in this country it will be a piece of robbery which will never be forgiven by India.

Fifthly, if inflation is sought to be controlled by devices like the Demonetisation Ordinance, whatever credit the Government possesses will disappear; wage-earners who have been thinking in terms of inflated money will become disgruntled; a social and economic crisis will follow. These results of Currency jugglery are moving like a Greek tragedy to pre-ordained catastrophe.

Out of the morass into which the financial jugglery of Britain has landed India, there is no escape for Britain except to give India the bargaining power by giving it a National Government. A National Government alone can take a bold step, regulate the payment of the Sterling debt, and impose upon the people willing sacrifices in order to restore the credit of the Government. The drastic measures which this step involves cannot possibly be carried out by a distrusted foreign government.

And now the shadow of famine is over the country !

III

BRITISH WARS AT INDIA'S EXPENSE

We shed our blood and paid for our own enslavement. Since then we have been fighting Britain's wars in order that she may be powerful enough to keep us in slavery. It is evidently the most immoral aspect of all imperialisms.

The Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress in 1931 to scrutinise the financial transactions of the East India Company and the British Government in India and the so-called public-debt of India came to the conclusion that enormous war-charges have been unjustifiably debited to India.

In addition to this, India has borne a share of the normal military expenditure, which would properly be debitable to the British Exchequer. Mr. Kumarappa, a member of the Committee, computed this share at about Rs. 540·13 crores upto 1913. This is about one-fourth of the normal military expenditure. Ramsay MacDonald himself suggested that half of this expenditure should devolve on the British Treasury.

By 1931 a sum of Rs. 1,050 crores was paid out as interest to U. K. and a refund of Rs. 536·12 crores was claimed back by the Congress.

Armed forces for Britain's benefit.

The army expenditure in India is mainly intended to help Britain to retain her empire. Ramsay MacDonald said: "A large part of the army in India—certainly one-half—is an Imperial army which we require for other than purely Indian purposes, and its costs, therefore, should be met from Imperial and not Indian funds."

Mr. Buchanan, a member of the Wellby Commission, said: "In so far as the military defence of India is concerned, India pays everything and the U.K. nothing in discharging these imperial duties. India has a fair claim that part of the burden should be borne by the Imperial Exchequer. As to the equity of the claim on the part of India, there can be no doubt."

The Indian Land Army, actually dominantly British army.

Just prior to World War II, the sanctioned strength of the army was 1,44,000 Indian and 52,000 British soldiers. But of the 7,200 officers, so many as 6,900 were British. This was because of a set policy. A Royal Commission after the Great Revolt of 1857, recommended that an irresistible force of British troops should be retained in India while a later Commission proposed that artillery should be mainly a European force.

The proportion of European to Indian troops was 1 to 5 in 1857 but in 1936 it was 1 to 2.

Officers are mostly British. In spite of war developments, the proportion of Indian to British officers is still 1 : 4. The Indian Navy was established in 1934, and a part of the burden so far borne by the British Naval budget, was transferred to Indian shoulders. By 1941, the R. I. N. had grown six times, but there was not even a single cruiser in the Navy. The first R.I.A.F. squadron was formed in 1933 but was completed in 1939, after six years.

The Indian land army, actually the Indian part of it, is antiquated, lacking most of the latest weapons and is officered mostly by the British. Our R.I.N. and R.I.A.F. are a mockery even in 1946.

In the name of Defence.

Expenditure of imperial expeditions has always been borne by India. Between 1838 and 1920, the Indian army was engaged outside India for imperial purposes on nineteen occasions. A large part of the expenditure incurred by these expeditions was borne by the Indian tax-payer.

In 1904, Sir E. Ellis stated frankly: "I think it is undoubted that the Indian army in future must be a main factor in the maintenance of balance of power in Asia."

Egypt Expedition (1882), Frontier Wars (1882-92), Burma Wars (1886) and Bhutan War (1863) added to the Indian Public Debt a burden of about Rs. 100 crores. In the time of Lord Wellesley we bore the expenditure of expeditions to Ceylon, Moluccus, Singapore, Isle of France, Cape Colony and Egypt ; to Java in Lord Minto's time. We also bore the cost of the war with Nepal; of Burmese Wars (1824-26 and 1852-52) ; of Afghan Wars; of wars with Persia and China (upto 1858).

At our cost and with the blood of Indian soldiers Britain consolidated her imperial position in Asia. We continued to be slaves in peace and cannon-fodder in war. We have lived only so that British power may flourish. And the tragedy of it, the help we gave to Britain was itself the instrument of our subjection.

These problems are not mere problems of physical coercion, nor of section 144. These are the psychological problems which can only be solved by directing the mass energies, which are now running waste, into channels of national reconstruction by guiding their giant waves of enthusiasm for reconstructional purposes. It is a problem not of national suppression but of a national reorganisation.

IV

EVERYTHING EXCEPT SELF-RULE

Expert medical opinion has steadily condemned the disquieting condition in which poverty under British Rule is facing India's life. Sir John Magaw, former Director General, Indian Medical Service, states :

“All the available evidence goes to show that the average duration of life in India is about half of what it might be and that this abbreviated existence is lived at a very low level of health and comfort. There is some difference of opinion as to whether, during the past fifty years, the conditions of life have improved or deteriorated ; but even if some slight improvement may have taken place, the existing conditions of life and state of affairs are so profoundly unsatisfactory that they demand investigation and redress. Even more disquieting is the forecast for the future.....There is a prospect of a steady deterioration in the state of nutrition of the people.”

This shows what British trusteeship has reduced India to. And what an India ! Next

to U.S.A., it is the biggest producer of farm products. Its annual estimated production of cotton is six million bales of 400 lbs. She has a monopoly of jute, she produces nine million bales a year. She has abundant supplies of wood. She is the largest producer of oil-seeds, tobacco, sugar, hides and skins too. She claims $\frac{1}{3}$ of the world's cattle population. Her forests, equal to $\frac{1}{5}$ of the total cultivated area, supply 100 million tons of wood a year besides valuable commodities like lac. Though her annual coal production is only 26 million metric tons, the resources are estimated at about 55 million tons. India has the largest reserve of iron-ore of the rich variety; 3,600 million tons of ore are available. She has the biggest reserve of manganese ore and three-fourths of world's mica supplies. She is the world's biggest supply source of ilmenite, monazite, sircon.

The recent discoveries in Baluchistan show that she has a large reserve of sulphur. Her power resources approximate 25 million kilowatts. Next to China she produces the largest supply of tea. The vast Indo-Gangetic plain is one rich, extensive alluvial tract most suited to intensive farming for food products. Its depth exceeds 1,600 feet below surface.

India's human resources are illimitable. Though numerically we are less than the Chinese, we are more compact, better organised,

of a richer efficiency. "A nation's true wealth lies not in its lands and waters, not in its forests and mines, not in its flocks and herds, not in its dollars but in its healthy and happy men, women and children.¹"

India has everything except self-rule and the millions of men, women and children are unhealthy and under-nourished. Their lives are blighted by a constant fear. Five giants—as Sir William Beveridge called them, Want, Ignorance, Disease, Squalor, Idleness—have the Indian masses, in their grip more than the people of any other land.

India has been the classic land of bumper crops in the past. If Britain destroyed the Indian industry, she has equally ruined the vitality and resilience of our agricultural economy.

Millions and millions of rupees have been wasted on foreign wars. Nothing, however, has been done to organise this great national industry on which India's millions live. If year before last, millions died of famine in Bengal, if today there is a prospect of a terrible famine ahead, it is because of the criminal neglect of our agricultural economy.

The total area of British India is 1005 million acres. In 1937-38, out of this total, 281

1. Whipple.

million acres only were sown with crops. Another 110 million acres were cultivable waste and 58 million acres were fallow land.

If we take all-India figures, 360 million acres were sown ; cultivable waste represents 170 million acres, and fallow land another 80 million acres.

In British India, only a meagre 0·86 acre of land per head is cultivated. There again is the fact that *per capita* acreage is declining. Despite the increase in the total area cultivated, the rate of increase in population has reduced the area of cultivated land per head of population dependent on agriculture. The position is dangerous.

Even as things are, there is no occupational equilibrium. And this lack of balance is growing worse.

Between 1881 and 1941 there has been 55·8 per cent increase in the total population and only 50 per cent in the rural population. The acreage per person engaged in agriculture, therefore, has come down from 1·28 to 1. It is easy to lay the balance on increasing population. But would any government in these days of scientific treatment for agriculture be forgiven if it did not provide new sources of satisfying the needs of the increasing population ?

Agriculture and animal husbandry all the world over are the inseverable parts of a single industry. The situation as regards the country's cattle is still worse.

Out of the total world stock of 700 million cattle, India possesses about 190 million. Of the world stock, about 125 million are superfluous and uneconomical.

In every province more than 25 per 100 acres are superfluous and uneconomical. The average comes to 67 cattle per 100 acres to sown area, against 15 for China and 6 for Japan. But in fact there are only 60 million working cattle for about 300 million acres, a number hopelessly inadequate for intensive farming.

Dr. Burns has worked certain eloquent estimates to show why cattle in India are growing uneconomical. The minimum feed requirements of cattle in India are about 225 million tons of roughages and 17 million tons of concentrates. As against this minimum, the total feed available is only 175 million tons of roughages and less than 4 million tons of concentrates.

THE POVERTY WHICH BRITAIN WROUGHT

In spite of a few spectacular fortunes in the hands of a very small number of industrialists, British Rule has definitely brought growing poverty to India. Incontrovertible figures establish the fact.

The present agricultural wage in Northern India is worth only about one-half of the quantity of food-grains available to the agricultural worker or day labourer on the prevailing scale of wages in Akbar's time. Both Pelsaert and De Laet mention that during the Moghal times the lower classes were consuming butter every day with *khichri*. Terry specifically mentions "the great store of salt, abundance of sugar growing in India." Sugar sold at 2d. per lb. (about 5 pies) entered more commonly as an item of household consumption of the poorer classes than in modern India. Blochmann observes that under the Moghals and before, the use of woollens and, for the poorer classes, blanket was much more general than now.

By about the nineteenth century, as Buchmann's survey shows, "the supply of milk, oil, sugar, vegetable, pulses, salt and other seasonings was more scanty and the people of Bihar

and Bengal could not afford the daily use of rice."

The wages today, in substance, for an unskilled worker are one-half or one-third, and for a skilled worker one-fourth or one-fifth of what they respectively got in Akbar's days. Under British Rule, the Indian worker has to live on one-third or one-fourth of what he lived on before the British came to India.

William Digby estimates in his *Prosperous British India* that the average Indian got 2d. a day in 1850, 1½d. a day in 1880 and only 1¼d. a day in 1900.

Within fifty years of the Great Revolt of 1857, an Indian was forced to live on less than one-half of his previous earnings. Since 1880, there has been in fact a steady decline in the *per capita* income of India.

But even *per capita* estimates are misleading. They are statistical abstractions and do not give the real picture. For every man who makes an income of over Rs. 62 some one or the other makes an income which is less. Taking India as a whole, therefore, the bulk of the people do not make anything like Rs. 19·6 per head per year.

There is again the fact that inequality of income fluctuates very widely in this country. "If we take the urban classes, nearly one-half

of their total income belongs to less than one-tenth of their total number. Inequality of income is present in at least equally great measure also among the agricultural classes."

A factual survey of income-figures collected from 50 villages revealed a *per capita* income of Rs. 14 per annum. A survey of over 600 villages in C.P. disclosed a *per capita* income of Rs. 12 per annum.

So that for a large mass of people inhabiting countryside, a *per capita* income estimate of Rs. 12 to 20 would be in accord with facts.

The annual *per capita* income of U. K. was estimated in 1930 at £76. In India £5 would be a very liberal figure.

There has been no improvement in the last decade. The population of India has grown to 400 millions. The total national income has also increased in figures. But *per capita* income to-day is the same as it was in the thirties. The money income average to-day may come upto over Rs. 150 but if it is corrected to the price-level of 1931-32, the average income cannot possibly be higher than the income in 1931-32. For, prices to-day, as I have pointed out, have almost trebled since 1931-32, particularly during the war years. The currency inflation is indicated by a rise in the total notes from 181 crores on 1st September, 1939 to 1,182 crores on 1st February, 1946.

During the last eleven years, therefore, poverty has not been reduced to any significant level.

The delegation of the British Trade Union Congress to India in 1928, made the following observations :

“The vast majority of workers in India do not receive more than about 1 sh. a day. In the province of Bengal, which includes the large mass of industrial workers, investigations declared that as far as they could ascertain, 60 per cent of the workers were in receipt of wages of not more than one shilling per day in the highest instance, scaling down to 7d. for men and 3d. in the case of women and children. Upon these miserable pittance, the workers are expected to keep body and soul together and labour through the whole working day (often in a vitiated atmosphere and under the most irksome conditions) which on the average cannot be less than one of ten hours.”

We have now less of everything than we want normally. We have to-day only 75 per cent of the food, 35 per cent of the milk, 25 per cent of the doctors that India's population needs at the minimum.

VI

INDIA'S AGRICULTURE IN RUINS

It must not be forgotten that India largely lives on milk and milk products. The cow is not merely an appendage of agriculture. It is really the mother of the race. What has the British Government done to maintain her capacity and yield?

The average yield of an Indian cow is a little over 2 lbs. a day. In Holland, it is 20 lbs. a day, in U. K. it is 15 lbs. a day, in New Zealand, 14 lbs. a day. In pre-war period, Germany under a government which is held up to the hatred of the whole world, had so looked after its cattle that it produced the same quantity of milk with 25 million cattle which we have with our 200 millions. She had seen to it that every cow in Germany was equal to 8 cows in India.

When the whole world is spending public money on the improvement of agriculture and cattle what did the British Government do? Money had to be spent on Imperial wars, not for the initial needs of the country.

What is more, the increase has been very little since 1900. Out of a total budget of 1.6 crores for the Agricultural Department and Veterinary Department, 54 lakhs are at present being

spent for the improvement of livestock. What generosity and what foresight ! Science may have advanced elsewhere, not in India. Thanks to the British !

Village Economy Undermined.

The Indian village economy prior to 1850 was self-contained. The money-lenders and the agriculturists were mutually accommodating and helpful. British rule destroyed village economy. Naturally rural indebtedness began to weight down the farmers in an increasing measure.

Dr. P. J. Thomas, estimating rural indebtedness, puts 1200 crores as rather a low figure. He thinks that the burden must be about 2000 crores as there was a fall in prices of 50 per cent. between 1929 and 1934.

As a result of the gross neglect of village economy the number of the landless is on the increase. In 1921, the landless labourers formed one-fifth of those engaged in agriculture. In 1931, the proportion was one third. It has increased considerably since then.

The process of driving the farmer out of his land is continuing unchecked. Only a third of the lands belongs to those who actually cultivate it. On the other hand, in France 60 per cent. of the cultivators own land, in Switzerland 80 per cent., in Germany 88 per cent.

Decreasing Fertility.

Britain, of course or rather its agent in India, has not raised its little finger to stop the progress of deterioration of soil-fertility. In old days, there were traditional methods of restoring fertility to the land in order to make up for what was taken away from it year after year. These methods were neglected. No one taught modern methods to us. The British Government did nothing to arrest this downward progress. It was only concerned with drawing more revenue, in maintaining law and order and incurring war expenditure.

The Royal Commission on Agriculture came to the conclusion that a stabilised condition is reached and a low but permanent standard of fertility is established. It was an euphemistic way of stating that the soil is so deteriorated that it cannot deteriorate any further.

Who is responsible for the criminal neglect which has resulted in our food deficiency ?

Most of the land in India is still left exposed to the vagaries of the monsoon. Only 23 per cent. of the total area sown is irrigated. In the Indian States, it is still less. Only 1 per cent., *i.e.* 11 million out of 63 million acres. Since the Irrigation Committee's Report of 1901, the progress in irrigation has been little.

In 38 years the total irrigated area rose by 10 per cent. The percentage of irrigated to the sown area rose by 3 per cent.

Diminishing Food Supply.

The British officer at one time claimed to be the *Ma-baap* of the poor people of India. We have only to look at the result of the *Ma-baap* rule to see what it has done. In 1911, the area sown *per capita* in British India was 0.9 acre. By 1941 it had declined to 0.72 acre, by so much as 20⁰/₁₀₀. The decline has been increasing rapidly. It has been .02 acre *per capita* between 1911 and 1919, 0.06 acre *per capita* between 1921-1931 and 0.1 acre *per capita* between 1931-1941. We are going down the incline.

To-day we are faced with a terrible famine. Who is responsible for it ?

In 1800, on the authority of British experts, surplus was available to the farmers and others as reserves of grain against draught. But a blind disregard of the vital need for providing regular food supply has characterised the British Government from the beginning. According to the Warren Hastings's Report, the famine of 1770 swept away at least one-third of the inhabitants. In 1778, the Famine Commission censured the Government of Bengal and the Revenue Board for failing to take notice of signs of famine in time. But the British Rulers were Bourbons. They forgot everything ; they learnt nothing.

In 1943, the same pathetic story happened

in Bengal. Men died by millions. The British officer never thinks of the calamity that is coming.

In the result, famine has been taking a toll of human lives in India by millions on a progressive scale.

The Bengal Famine.

The story of the Bengal famine is too recent to need recapitulation. The Bengal famine cost India $1\frac{1}{2}$ million lives according to official estimates. The Anthropological Department of the Calcutta University estimated the number at about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions. Recently Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar speaking before the United Nations Food Organisation referred to the unofficial estimate as 3 millions. And little, if anything, was done to alleviate the distress on an organised scale by the Central or the Provincial Government, nor the highly placed criminals who were responsible for this catastrophe brought to book. The Woodhead Committee Report (1945) states: "We find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that in 1880 the whole food situation was in certain respects more favourable than the situation with which we are faced to-day."

What a tribute to the progress under British rule from 1880 to 1945 !

VII

THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

India is now on the threshold of freedom. She has to solve the problems of post-war reconstruction, she has also to mobilise the whole machinery of Society so that our man-power may be organised for the reconstruction. We cannot allow our man-power to be wasted, We dare not lapse into a period of depression.

The economists have been talking of the right of work. But we have to go one step forward. We must secure the right of full employment, or if you so like it, the opportunity for full employment.

The world has paid too dearly for ignoring this aspect of human rights. With blind fatalism we have submitted to the recurring cycles of boom and depression. For instance, when the great depression came in 1930 no one had made any preparation to meet it. No one knew how to deal with the millions of unemployed thrown out by it. Even the Marxist thinkers accepted it as a logical outcome of the capitalist system.

But the world has grown wiser now. The Conference of the International Labour Organisation held in New York in 1941 insisted that the close of the war must be followed

by immediate action, previously planned and arranged, for changing over of industry to the needs of peace. In April 1944, the International Labour Conference held at Philadelphia urged upon the world that Employment Exchanges should be established. The Government of India started Employment Exchanges at different centres between 1943 and 1945. Early this year the U.N.O. had before it the consideration of Full Employment Bill. Few of us have the idea of the magnitude of the employment problem which faces the world today. About 15 crores of people are practically affected by it. Nations of the world are waking up to the fact that unless all able-bodied men and women are given full employment, the world cannot settle down to peace.

We have our problems too. The end of the war has released about 20 lakhs of men and women to be re-absorbed in the peace-time economic order. These men and women have distinguished themselves in war. Unless immediate steps are taken to help them they would be driven to seeking employment from door to door or to beg in the streets or to starve or ultimately to rebel against the order of Society which provided opportunities to get slaughtered but none to settle down in decent life.

In spite of the Exchanges put up by the Government of India, we are behind many countries in the matter of employment activi-

ties. In several countries that I know of, economic policies and practices are being closely studied. Plans for maintaining a high level of economic activity are also being discussed. The general question of full employment and its twin brother, the question of unemployment and sickness-insurance are being dealt with.

In India many of these features are unfortunately absent. The present Employment Exchanges are doing their best, but without a thorough reorganisation and a State Unemployment Insurance Scheme, the effort is not likely to succeed. In India people are simply not interested in such problems. Our employment methods are haphazard, unscientific, almost medieval. The jobber, the man to provide employment is still supreme. Unless the jobber is bribed, no one can secure employment; and the employer has no choice either. It causes dislocation of labour and very often renders both the employer and the employee helpless.

In the United Kingdom, Exchanges were first started in 1910. They were then regarded only as experiments, in the same way as they are regarded in India to-day. Many people thought them waste of money. But now Exchanges provide help to a quarter of the workers' population of the United Kingdom.

India must fall in line with modern conditions and our present Employment Exchanges.

must develop into an all-India planned effort for re-distributing the human resources of our country.

Exchanges like the ones organised by the Government of India have immense advantages over the present system.

First, the task of the employers and the employees is made easier and the whole social machinery of employment works smoothly.

Secondly, the Exchanges provide a field for research in social and economic conditions of the country; they provide indications as to the growth of unemployment; they provide an opportunity to Governments to frame their policies and programmes and thus save the country from economic disaster.

Thirdly, the ex-servicemen which the Exchanges provide are trained workers and can adapt themselves more easily to works of an allied nature.

Fourthly, the Exchanges increase the mobility of labour and at the same time stabilise the labour market by facilitating the redistribution of the industrial population.

Fifthly, by controlling labour and its movement the Exchanges regulate the dynamic energy of economic progress and thus the supply and the demand for labour are continually adjusted to each other. They would

thus help in maintaining economic equilibrium and save the country from the disasters of depression.

Many countries in the West have organised employment services on a country-wide basis. The present Exchanges have therefore to develop a technique and staff necessary to meet this problem.

This requires a mighty effort. It will require co-ordinated plans between the Government of India and Povincial Governments. It will require the collection of necessary information by the Exchanges. It will involve an orderly demobilisation of the members of the armed forces and their reintegration to civil life. It will require the transfer of lakhs of workers from one industry, occupation or area to another. It may also involve developing a programme of public works for all persons seeking work.

This is so gigantic a work that all the Governments in India, if they want to escape a social and economic crisis, will have to utilise their machinery for it; for, an object like this will require not only flexible programme of public works but suitable provisions for financial assistance to persons without employment. It must involve a highly developed employment-machinery which will serve as a directing and co-ordinating agency for labour distribution.

The Employment Exchanges in India set up by the Government of India have really just begun their work. But the employers and the employees have yet to appreciate how much they save their trouble. There are no doubt practical difficulties. The scale of wages offered by employers in India is too low compared with the wages in military services. The employers also do not like to displease the old jobbers. The ordinary labourer also looks upon the Exchange as a strike-breaking organisation. But these are very natural suspicions which a new experiment invariably rouses and will soon be dissipated.

In India, human resources cannot exist without a planned future. Where the imperative need for planning is concerned, India cannot be looked at except as a single unit. Her manpower cannot be sub-divided into sections and in the matter of employment there cannot be provincial or sectional boundaries. The problem is one of India, as one and indivisible. And it can only be tackled by our present new Government of India which carries with it the confidence of the "dumb millions" who are looking to it for the reconstitution of the whole economy of the country. I am sure it will solve the problem.

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INDIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

An undeclared war on the diplomatic front is being waged between the Anglo-American Combine on the one hand and the U. S. S. R. on the other. In Europe, they are quarrelling over Germany, Italy and Greece. In France, the Pro-Russian Communists are struggling for supremacy. From Finland to Trieste there is a central frontier running right across Europe on which problems are becoming more complicated. In the Far East, the U. S. S. R. is trying to have a finger in the Japanese pie. It also supports the Chinese Communists against her national government.

But more than that, the Middle East has been converted into a cockpit for the rival ambitions of these two world combines. Power politics are still largely motivated by intense nationalisms. The fear of military insecurity dominates international diplomacy as much as in the days of Metternich, perhaps more. The U. S. S. R. had developed an economic and political imperialism far superior in technique to any of the older imperialisms. It also recommenced its world campaign to

foster the ideological conflict between capitalistic and collectivistic economics.

The United Nations Organization is a very weak instrument for the attainment of collective security. It is mainly a league of States with no power to enforce decisions. In the matter of withdrawing the armed forces from Iran, the U. S. S. R. has marched from one triumph to another, almost in all cases at the expense of Britain.

Nowhere have the problems been as acute as in the Middle East. This 'Middle East' is a very vague term ; but its frontiers now are much more extensive than what ordinary people imagine. Its western boundary coincides with the Cyrenaican-Egyptian frontier. On the east, it touches the western boundary of Afghanistan. In the north, it coincides with the Russo-Turkistan frontier. The southern boundary goes right down to the Egyptian Sudan and Ethiopia. They include Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt, Eritrea, Somaliland (both British and Italian) Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the Arabian and Persian Gulf, British Protectorates, Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. These boundaries include a seething mass of political ambitions, rival nationisms and racial conflicts.

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the British and the American trade and communications. The Suez Canal, the pivot of the British world power in Asia, is its very heart. Through it lies the British road to India and the Far East. It is the only region which can give to the U. S. R. its coveted outlet to warm waters. The area is rich in natural resources, particularly in oil. It is said to possess about 30 per cent of the world's estimated oil reserves. It also provides a large potential market for consumers' goods.

The Middle East has also grown nationalisms. There is first, the Turkish nationalism; next, the Iranian nationalism. Then, there are minor nationalisms like those of Ethiopia, the Armenians, the Kurds and the Azerbaijanians. The most volcanic of them is the Arab nationalism. It is led by Effendis, the large land-owners and Muslim religious leaders who dream in terms of a Pan-Islamic world domination. No doubt, to-day, it is a highly disorganised force expressing itself in warring sub-nationalisms. But, of late, it has found a rallying point in anti-Jewish agitation. The Arab League, the creature of British diplomacy, is one of its consolidating factors. But more virile than all these nationalisms is the concentrated and progressive nationalism of 6,00,000 Jews which is supported by the closely-knit millions of Jews in the rest of the

world. The Anglo-American Commissioners' Report has thrown a bomb in the already restless Arab World. America openly favours Zionism. Britain dares not part from the Arabs. U. S. S. R. is waiting to intervene.

The whole of this region has for many years been dominated by Britain. Its interests are strategic as well as economic. Few people in India consider the Indian problem from background of British interests in the Middle East, but it is the troubles in that region which have brought India nearer to independence.

Egypt, since the Treaty of 1936, has been friendly to Britain. Ethiopia is under British influence. Aden, Eritrea and Somaliland (both British and Italian) are again part of the British dominions. Bahrein, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Palestine are controlled by Britain under one or the other of legal relations which imperialism assumes. Iraq has a special treaty with Britain which enjoys valuable concessions there. Britain is dominant in South Iran and both the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Abadan Refinery area are British.

The American interest in the Middle East is small, though potentially large. The American air-lines and shipping companies want special guarantees in this region. America

naturally wants a share of its trade. Several American companies are operating in one or the other of these States. There are American Universities in Syria and Egypt, and Zionism gives U. S. A. a direct interest in Palestine in the future of the Arab world.

The U. S. S. R. has very little present interest in the Middle East; but Moscow knows that unless this Anglo-American fortress is broken through, its dreams of a world empire are not likely to materialise. It wants to coerce Turkey in giving up the exclusive control of the Dardanelles. It wants an access to the Mediterranean and if possible to the Arabian Sea. Russian diplomatic agents are busy among the Arabs enlisting their goodwill against Britain. In Palestine, it supports orthodox Catholicism. In the World Trade Conference, it supported Zionism. These conflicting loyalties are only intended to create trouble for British Hegemony in the Middle East.

In Iran, however, Russia recently found the weakest link in the Middle East chain. In 1942, she agreed to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iran. In November 1945, however, she strengthened the Tudeh Party and supported the open revolt in Azerbaijan. She declined to keep her promise of withdrawing the troops by March 2nd, 1946. Russia is now in direct conflict

with Britain in the Middle East. By her desire to control the Dardanelles she threatens British control of the Eastern Mediterranean. Her recent *coup* in Iran has created a situation which would threaten India on the one side and the British-controlled Iran on the other. Her interest in the Arab-Jew controversy is neither philanthropic nor academic.

To these problems the British Labour Party has brought to bear a fore-sighted statesmanship. The Arab world is medieval, and is still under British influence. National India is overwhelmingly democratic. National Egypt is also pro-British. According to the latest British policies, India and Egypt, as free and national states, would provide an axis round which not only the Middle East but the whole of South Asia could be relied upon to revolve. A democratic federation of free nations appears to enlightened British Labour leaders the only guarantee against Russian aggression. Led by this vision, the British Government decided to convert India from a sullen and restless bondsman into a free and trusted friend.

II

EUROPEANS & THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Following was the legal opinion sent to Gandhiji by me in connection with the right of the Europeans to vote for or stand as candidates for the Constituent Assembly :—

- (a) Whether the Europeans who are foreigners and non-nationalists, are, under the terms of the Cabinet Mission's Statement, entitled to vote at the election of or ;
- (b) Stand as candidates for the election of members for the Constituent Assembly.

(1) The Cabinet Mission came to India for purpose defined in the announcement made in Parliament, by the British Prime Minister on behalf of His Majesty's Government on March 15. The relevant words of the said announcement are as follows :

“My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavour to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government

is to replace the present regime is for India to decide, but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making the decision."

In the said announcement, the British Prime Minister expressed a wish that "India and her people" may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth after the new constitution is framed.

(2) The word "India" in the said announcement can only be construed as meaning Indians. This is made clear by the statement issued by the Mission on May 16, (hereinafter referred to as the statement). In paragraph 3, it is stated: "We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India."

The said words in paragraph 3, only amplify the intention contained in the British Prime Minister's announcement and indicate that the word India used therein refers to Indians, as the only persons who will frame the new constitution.

(3) This view is supported by paragraph 24 of the statement, which, among other things, says; "We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian People themselves to agree upon the

method of framing the new constitution under which they will live."

In the last portion of the statement, the Mission further state: "We hope in any event that you (Indians) will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice."

The British subjects who are in the country as non-national Britons are clearly included in "our people" and "countrymen" and as different from "they" (Indians) and "the Indian People."

(4) Paragraph 18 of the statement provides for the machinery for forming the Constituent Assembly and the principles and methods to be followed for election of the members thereof. Sub-clause (b) of the said paragraph provides that the provincial allocation of seats has to be divided between the main communities in each province in proportion to their population. Clause (c) makes a provision that the representatives allotted to each community in a province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

For the purpose of the Constituent Assembly the paragraph recognises three main communities of Indians; namely, "General", Muslim and Sikh. The words "we, therefore, propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly" in paragraph 19 (1), mean

the same thing as representatives allotted to each of these communities.

(5) The 'general' community is deemed to include persons who are neither Muslims nor Sikhs. It is to consist of Hindus and other groups of persons referred to therein as "smaller minorities." The word "smaller" qualifying the word minorities has been used in contra-distinction to Muslims and Sikhs, who are classified as major communities of Indians. The word community had to be used for "minority" for the Muslims and the Sikhs only because a new artificial group called general community consisting of the majority, *viz.*, the Hindus and the smaller minorities, has to be formed.

(6) The question therefore is, whether European non-nationals are a "smaller minority." The word "minorities" is used in paragraph 19, sub-clause (iv) and paragraph 20, both of which deal with the rights of citizens and the rights of the minorities.

(7) The word "minority" as used in constitutional treaties, enactments and documents means a group of nationals with distinct interests, as against the interests of a larger group of nationals called the majority, but in all cases both such groups are treated as always belonging to the same State having a common domicile and citizenship.

The treaty of June 28, 1919, which the Allied

The learned author on page 64 of his treatise refers to a resolution passed at the Third Assembly of the League of Nations emphasising the said duty of racial, religious, linguistic minority in a state. A minority in the statement, therefore,¹ means a comparative smaller group of nationals of the state and not a group of nationals of another state living within the boundaries of the former.

(9) The Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform 1933-34, in its report while dealing with the special responsibilities and powers of the Provincial Governors and the Governor-General also gave the same meaning to the minorities in India. It is there stated that the authority of the Provincial Governors as also of the Governor-General was interlinked with their responsibility to the Crown and Parliament both for peace and tranquillity and for the protection of all the weak and helpless among her (India's) people. In paragraph 321 of the said report of the committee, while dealing with the Anglo-Indian community and the problem of their education makes a distinction between "Europeans" and "Domiciled Europeans". This clearly establishes that the Joint Committee treated Europeans other than Europeans domiciled in this country as being non-nationals of India.

(10) The representation to Europeans given in the various provincial legislatures under the

1. Hall's *International Law* 8th ed. p. 64.

Government of India Act, 1935, and in prior statutes is not a representation given to them as a racial minority of India but as a vested interest existing in the country at the time of the framing of the constitution, which was admittedly not based on the principle of self-determination or on a recognition of Indians as being entitled to frame their own constitution.

(11) That the Mission did not intend to depart from the accepted meaning of minorities is clear from paragraph 18 of their statement, where they state that "the most satisfactory method of election to the Constituent Assembly would be the one based on adult franchise." Adult, in this clause, can only mean a right exercisable by persons who are Indian citizens. But the procedure of granting adult franchise having found by them to be impracticable, the Mission adopts an alternative course. This again would lead to the conclusion that there was no intention to get the constitution framed by persons who are not Indian nationals or citizens.

(12) The words "minority" and "majority", therefore, in my opinion, were used with reference to India or Indian people as used by the British Prime Minister in his said announcement and as used in the Mission's statement, and do not include non-national residents in India. Any other view would conflict with the expressed intention to ask only Indians to frame their own constitution.

(13) In my opinion, therefore, the words "elected by the Provincial Assembly" and "by the smaller minorities" in paragraphs 18 and 19 must necessarily be construed as restricting the franchise to the Indian members of such a Legislative Assembly inclusive of Domiciled Europeans, who are Indian nationals, and cannot be extended to apply to European British subject not domiciled in India.

(14) The words in paragraph 19 "elected by each Provincial Assembly" may be argued to indicate a different meaning. But "*ex-concessis*" the election is not by the Provincial Assembly as such but by its members representing the three groups.

(15) It follows also that the representatives on the Constituent Assembly have to be Indians.

III

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

India has during the last three months taken a long stride towards national unity and independence. For the first time in history, the people of India are meeting in a constitution-making body set up by the State Paper of May 16. It is not an *ad hoc* conference but a representative body, and as such its meaning lies in its power to will for all after due deliberation. Thus it fulfils the test of corporate sovereignty. The 'National Will' will be found in this national assembly.

The second gain is that the constitution-making body will be made up only of Indians. The foreign ruler will not be represented. Indians will be free to discuss and modify their opinion from their own point of view and thus express the common will to obtain the highest possible common result. In that sense this assembly would have the element of independence at the very start.

Apart from these features, it brings all the parties and interests in India on a common platform with a view to create an opportunity to adjust their differences and forging a national constitution and the necessary grou

or provincial constitutions. This constitution will be our own creation, not imposed by Britain as hitherto. In that way, the Assembly will become the instrument of self-determination.

India, therefore, has achieved through non-violence what no nation has achieved so far in history: the right and the opportunity to determine its future. It is now for India to avail itself of this opportunity.

But the problems inherent in such an assembly should not be lost sight of. Since the Constituent Assembly was invented in France in 1789, there have been disruptive forces which have tended to make an expression of the national will through such an assembly difficult. In the 18th century, the disruptive forces were supplied by the provinces. In India today, the disruptive force is supplied by the religio-political programme of the Muslim League, though, no doubt, it must be said to the credit of the League and its leaders that in accepting a single national government for India, however narrow, they have contributed both wisdom and realism to the cause of India's national independence.

As things are, the Constituent Assembly will represent two power groups; the National group and the League group. And the success

of the Constituent Assembly will largely depend upon the harmony which these two groups will be able to achieve by discussion and deliberation.

At one time, this looked almost a hopeless effort. But now that the League has conceded the necessity of a Central Government as an expression of the national unity of the country, other problems will become easy of a friendly settlement.

IV

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE CONGRESS SOCIALISTS

The A.I.C.C. decision was expected. Since the beginning of the Gandhian Congress, there has always been a small section of opinion which has taken delight in opposing the Working Committee's resolutions. So has it been this time. The only outstanding feature of the session¹ was Moulana Saheb's bold and frank exposition of the Congress stand, a stand to which he has contributed such distinguished statesmanship.

The Congress under Gandhiji's leadership, has achieved a unique triumph in history. As a result of a non-violent struggle and a providential combination of international factors, we have in the State Paper of May 16, 1946, a document which Britain and India with practical unanimity have accepted as a working-basis for India's political destiny. This in itself is no small achievement.

But the bringing into existence of the Constituent Assembly as representing the 'sovereign national will' is an event of unique importance for a country which is a Dependency of the British Empire. No one suggests

1. Session at Bombay.

that the Constituent Assembly necessarily implies the independence of India. But it is a stage—and a necessary stage—through which only can independence be achieved. And the Nation is bound to emerge immensely more powerful after the constitution-making process has been completed.

It is difficult to understand how the Constituent Assembly which we have been clamouring for all these years would rivet British Imperialism on India, as is suggested by Sri Jai Parkash Narain and his friends. If the British delegation came to India, and after protracted negotiations produced the State Paper, and if at the instance of the Congress they repudiated Mr. Jinnah's preposterous claim to represent all Muslims of India, it was because the Congress has forged a sanction which Britain dared not ignore. If that sanction is there, the national will as expressed in the resolutions of the Constituent Assembly will have to be accepted by Britain. If the sanction disappears, neither speeches nor for that matter individual underground heroism of 1942 type can make any change in British imperialism.

The leading Congress Socialists, some of whom spoke in A. I. C. C. are honest and brave men. They have suffered immensely in the 'Quit India' movement, as have many hundreds of

Gandhians in the country. They have sincerely come to believe that but for the Right Wing weakness, the free India of their dreams would have sprung into existence long ere now. Possibly they feel that now that the right wing is going to form some kind of government, their historic role is the one played by DeValera against Michael Collins.

The Socialists are frankly against non-violence. The creed of the Congress which they have subscribed to by being members of the Congress restricts it to the use of peaceful and legitimate means.

What one cannot understand is, why, if they are so confident of the Indian masses being with them as they say, they should continue to weaken the Congress by preaching a gospel contrary to its creed from inside. Why do they not organise an All-India Socialist Party on the strength of their own creed rather than work under the wings of the Gandhian Congress.

It is a thousand pities that Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali could not borrow the sobriety of Sri Jai Parkash Narain and Sri Achuyt Patwardhan and could not maintain the dignified level of the debate. Long years of suffering have left an indelible mark on this little heroine's outlook on politics. Her speech was both irrelevant and hysterical; and her

references to Gandhiji—the Father of the Nation, as the Netaji called him in his historic utterance in Malaya—would have been best left unspoken.

The A.-I. C. C. decision has now cleared the way for the Constituent Assembly. The nation would do well to concentrate on its work. It is bound to be both difficult and delicate. It will require the highest statesmanship in the country to do that work successfully. The leaders of the country have there before them, one of the most constructive work which ever faced politicians, a task only comparable to the one which faced the framers of the American Constitution. They must build and build both well and wisely.

V

NEW POLITICAL OUTLOOK FOR INDIA

During the last six months India has acquired a new political outlook. The causes of this outlook are two-fold. The international situation is such that a free and strong India is an essential factor in the world peace ; and secondly, the resisting strength of Indians has grown so effective that it is impossible for Britain to hold her down any longer.

This changed outlook has expressed itself in two great events of historic significance. The first is that the British Government has expressed its desire to quit India as soon as a strong National Government able to maintain peace in India is set up. Secondly, Indians for the first time, with practical unanimity, have agreed to work out their future political destiny on the basis indicated by the Cabinet Delegation's State Paper of May 16.

The Cabinet Delegation's efforts have had very far-reaching effects. In spite of dissident voices, the fact remains that Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the British Cabinet have all agreed to work out a scheme put forward by the State Paper.

I do not take a pessimistic view of the State Paper. It is the result of a compromise between the stand of the Congress and of the League and compromise is the essence of political advancement. I go further; the State Paper to my mind is not the result of mere British intentions. The Congress and the League have set the seal of approval on it: It is a Charter of India's political progress. It provides a strong union of India. It provides scope for communal harmony. It is elastic enough to enable us to come to fresh agreements and produce a new harmony. I realise that there have been comments and interpretations. But the two great institutions in this country have pledged themselves to working out the State Paper, and it is the duty of everyone to see that it is implemented.

For the first time in the history of the world a Constituent Assembly is meeting without a violent revolution or a war preceding it. It is the triumph of non-violence. It indicates a new stage in the affairs of human beings, when the fate of nations has to be decided not by bloodshed but by peaceful mutual adjustments. Some persons think lightly of the Constituent Assembly. I do not share that view. In that Assembly there are no foreigners. It is an expression, therefore, of the national will. It has provided an opportunity for conflicting interests to meet and settle their outstanding

differences. Given a spirit of goodwill, India will emerge as a strong and united nation at the end of the Constituent Assembly.

On this occasion, I must acknowledge the services rendered by my old friend, Mr. Jinnah. We were closely associated in the Home Rule Movement. We have cherished a friendly feeling for each other throughout life. For the last five years, my duty to the Motherland impelled me to raise my voice against the possible disruption of this country for which he stood. Now Mr. Jinnah in a spirit of compromise has accepted the validity of the claim that India must have a single national government with plenary powers by accepting the State Paper. I, therefore, take this public opportunity to express my deep appreciation of his statesmanship, and hope he will now help whole-heartedly in forging a Constitution for the Union of India.

Grouping has been causing a lot of heart-burning. Assam does not want to go with Bengal. Neither, North-West Frontier nor Sind wants to go with the Punjab. Naturally, therefore, there are difficulties. But difficulties are made to be overcome. And Indian statesmanship, I am sure, will rise to the occasion by finding a fresh scheme which will satisfy all interests, a scheme in which all Provinces will be autonomous, and all communities will be free to obtain full development.

Let us not forget the fact that the State Paper envisages a Federal Government for the Country, a centre with limited powers but of great international strength, and provinces autonomous but with enough scope to work together for the benefit of all. The interim government envisaged by the State Paper has yet to come. But I have no doubt that within a short time we will have interim government at the Centre which will be powerful enough to implement the decisions of the Constituent Assembly. It would be fatal if the formation of the interim government is postponed and the Constituent Assembly is reduced to debating society. It is therefore of the highest essence that every party should combine in order to usher in the interim government so essential to our future progress.

The world is waiting for a free and strong Indian National Government to shoulder its share of the world's responsibilities. A new life is opening before India. What is wanted is a spirit of goodwill, and despatch to implement the provisions of the State Paper.

Since the writing of this article, the Interim Government has already begun functioning at the centre.

VI IS THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SOVEREIGN ?

Is the Constituent Assembly a sovereign body ?

The Constituent Assembly, in my opinion, is a sovereign body for several reasons.

First, neither the foreign rulers of this country nor any foreigners are members of the Assembly.

Secondly, it reflects the proportionate strength of the people without the weightage which British Imperialism gave to certain communities for its own benefit.

Thirdly, subject to a treaty with Britain and the protection of minorities, it is charged with the duty of creating a new state.

Fourthly, it will be able to set up a provisional sovereign authority in India which will negotiate and enter into a treaty with Britain, the first function of the provisional Government of India and then bring into existence the first free government in India.

Is it necessary that there should be a revolution before a sovereign Constituent Assembly comes into existence ?

No.

The Central European countries had their own Constituent Assemblies after the foreign yoke was overthrown by the war. In some countries like France and Germany, constituent assemblies were called into existence by the people themselves to establish a new state. In Switzerland and America, the States came together to form a Constituent Assembly while in Canada and Australia, Constituent Assemblies were brought into existence without a war or a violent revolution and with British goodwill. In view of the advancement of humanity we must work for a change over of national power by peaceful means through Constituent Assemblies convoked as a matter of friendly adjustment. The pre-requisite of a Constituent Assembly is not a bloody revolution but the developing of sufficient popular power to bring about a willingness on the part of a foreign ruler to transfer power.

What is the primary condition for the success of the Constituent Assembly ?

The first condition, to my mind, is that its proceedings should be held in camera and that the Indian Press and the World Press should contribute to its success by keeping silent.

The first great Constituent Assembly, the Federal Conventions of the United States, which met in 1787, as a first step, wisely decided that nothing spoken in the House be printed or

otherwise published or communicated without leave. This pledge was honestly kept by the members.

George Washington, the President gave a firm warning, "I must entreat the gentlemen to be more careful lest our transactions get into the newspapers and disturb the public repose by premature speculations." The delegates foreswore their desire for newspaper notoriety and would not be influenced by the fear as to what their constituencies might think. As Washington said, "It is too probable that no plan that we propose will be adopted. Perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained. If, to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we come forward and defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and just can repair. The event is in the hand of God." The records of the convention were published fifty-five years after.

In Canada the Constituent Assembly chose to sit in camera from the very beginning. In Australia they kept their sittings open to the Press with the result that their efforts proved unsuccessful. Ultimately the Constituent Assembly sat in camera and its efforts were successful.

But in these days of wide newspaper publicity the patriotic press of India will have also to co-operate.

IS THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SOVEREIGN ?

What do you think will be the time required for the Constituent Assembly to frame the Constitution ?

If the members of the Constituent Assembly religiously sit down to their work with a determination to frame the Constitution, it cannot take more than six months. If, however, time is spent in debates instead of heart to heart negotiations on essentials, it may be one year, two or more. But the world situation requires that the Constituent Assembly should finish its deliberations as early as possible in order that a National Government, truly representative may take its share, in the reconstruction of the world.

Do you envisage any difficulties in the constitution of the several clauses in the State Paper ?

Personally I see no difficulty. All parties have agreed to the State Paper of May 16, and I see no reason why the document should not be taken as a charter within the four corners of which we have to settle our future constitution.

No doubt there will be differences on interpretations. But after all such differences have to be solved by an arbiter, or the Chairman in consultation with the Federal Court. Whatever the view of a clause or two, in my opinion the State

A NEW OUTLOOK

Paper gives us immense power and it would be a historic disaster if we failed to work the Constituent Assembly to a successful end. Once the parties meet with the fixed intention of setting things, things would be decided very rapidly.

VII

THE NATION AND THE NEW AGE

The world is so small that India cannot be considered except in terms of the world situation. The world has grown small and inter-linked. The U.N.O. is trying to set up a super-federal structure of the world. The Democracies and the U.S.S.R. are ranged against each other in an undeclared war on all but armed fronts. And a national centre for India is essential for the peace and progress of mankind.

The convening of the Constituent Assembly is a landmark in the history of India as it is a sovereign organ of all the people of India brought into existence by far-sighted statesmanship of Indian and British leaders. That it is the result of only non-violent pressure in international affairs is a brilliant piece against the murky background of power-politics of our age.

Mr. Jinnah, by refusing to join the Constituent Assembly, is doing a disservice to his community, the country and the whole humanity. He declines to discuss his claims; and he refuses to go to arbitration. He only threatens dire reprisals if the Congress and the British do not submit to his wishes.

In an age which wants to settle down to peaceful methods, Mr. Jinnah is trying to force upon India the exploded methods of unilateral action by force. If Mr. Jinnah is serious in trading on the country's fears, and the fear in which he is reported to be held by a few British I.C.S. officers at Delhi, he will live to be sorry for it. We shall refuse to submit to any force except the force of reason and friendliness. The nation, for which the Congress stands, does not live on Mr. Jinnah's mercy and it will answer the challenges.

But I still hope good sense will prevail. Hindus and Muslims cannot part; nationhood is their birthright and their destiny. And we will not permit anyone, not even Mr. Jinnah, to stand between us and freedom. Not only India but the whole world anxiously looks forward to this consummation.

VIII

FREE INDIA "IN ACTION"

Pandit Jawaharlal has formed the first Ministry of the Free India "in action". The nightmare that descended on India in 1857 has been lifted after a spell of 89 years. We can now breathe freely.

The event is a landmark in the history of India. I call Free India "in action" advisedly. It is not free in the technical sense. Still the British Viceroy is the head of the Government. Still, British arms maintain the peace of this country. But we are taking a big stride towards freedom. By reason of the struggles which India put up during the last fifty years, it has achieved the first step towards an independent control of the present administration.

Delhi is not *dur ast*. It is reached.

But the new Government has tremendous problems before it. There is the problem of the Muslim League and its promised direct action. There is the problem of starvation and of re-absorbing the war workers, of planning of the social and economic structure of society. Yet more. It has to get ready to defend the front-

iers of India in as short a time as possible before the next war overtakes our frontiers.

I have no illusions about peace. The war is on—in Iran on the Northern frontier, in Turkey, on the Dardanelles, in Yugoslavia, in the heart of Germany, in China. India has to take her place with these nations which want to evolve a Federation of the world's free nations. We have loitered too long in a jungle infested by blood-thirsty national sovereignties. India has to lead the way to a world state.

As a counterpart we have the problem of law and order, which always becomes critical during a period of transition. Congressmen, having spent all their lives in antagonism to the British forces of law and order in this country, naturally find it difficult to emphasize the supreme importance of law and order in the country, particularly at a time when the country is passing through a period of conflict. We have had, for a month, communal riot of Ahmedabad. We have now the Pakistan holocaust in Calcutta. We read of disturbances in Gaya and Allahabad. We know of attempts in different parts of India made by force of disintegration to express themselves in no uncertain voice. And it would be pure blind faith in human goodness if we refuse to prepare to meet the emergency.

But the new situation does not revolve

merely round the Pakistan riots. The general sense of order in the community has been seriously disturbed. We have all-India strikes in almost all departments of life. That there are economic grievances no one can deny. But the time and method of expressing them at this critical hour indicate a dangerous tendency. A collective insanity to overpower reason and mutual accommodation by coercion seems to be in air.

Gandhiji taught the methods of *Satyagraha*, the coercive power of non-violence. We have learnt coercion part of it, but without the non-violence.

The other day Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar came to preside over a meeting at the Royal Asiatic Library in Bombay. I am not concerned with his views or his popularity. A hundred odd Malayalis entered the Library, not to demonstrate, but short of man-handling, express themselves violently. They wanted that Sir C.P. should be produced in their midst. When I told one of them that it would be better to demonstrate non-violently, that we should not prevent people from expressing themselves on such an acute question as the unification of Kerala, I was met with the reply, "We are democrats with democrats, with fascists like C.P. we are fascists." It appears that we are learning the lessons of Fascism and Communism a bit too quickly.

Another such instance was witnessed the other day in the High Court premises. Mr. Nurie, ex-Minister, had appeared before an Election Tribunal, appointed by the Bombay Government, against Mr. Dang, the Communist candidate. The court was crowded with hundreds of workers, and when Mr. Nurie came down the stairs he was all but muled by the Communist supporters. It seems that it is a sin these days even to go to a court of law and assert one's rights against a group which can mobilise a few hundred men ready to overawe everybody into submission.

These are stray indications, but they describe the general atmosphere. And if the Governments in power in the country, Congress or otherwise, do not succeed in establishing a respect for order, which is a necessary precondition of civilised existence, we lapse into a kind of situation in which, as in the Germany after World War I, there will be an emergence of parties which will try to overcome each other by the use of brute force.

IX

BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA

Mr. Winston Churchill, the disgruntled ex-premier of England and the erstwhile world conqueror, has expressed once again his hostility towards India in his characteristic vein.

If he could, he would wipe out the progress made in Indo-British relations during the last three or four months. He would—if he could—again bring back the Amery regime with its offensive attitude and oppressive conduct towards India.

Luckily for England and the world, there are no prospects of Mr. Churchill ever getting back into power in order to translate his words into action.

The Labour Government now in power in England has shown the finest example of British broad-minded statesmanship in winning over the Congress to its side by agreeing to let India function as a Dominion in action. No greater feat of statesmanship had ever been performed by an imperial power. And the new cordiality that has sprung between India and Britain during the last three months has been the result of this act.

But Mr. Churchill would like to destroy all this, if he could.

Mr. Churchill's Tory friends like Earl Winterton made one point at Blackpool. They did not want the British army in India to be used for the purpose of maintaining peace in India, now that Indians are in power. They could make free use of that army to suppress the national rising in 1942. They could even boast at that time that there were more white troops in India then than at any time before. They could equally make use of it to retain power during the past. So long as Britain was the master, Mr. Churchill and his friends felt no qualm of conscience. But now that Britain and India are friends they have objection to the use of British army.

And so has India, too. We do not want the British army on the Indian soil. We do not want the British army to help us in solving out international difficulties. We do not want the British army of occupation. We want it to go. Gandhiji has declared it emphatically enough. Equally emphatic has been Panditji on this point.

No doubt during the present period of uncertainty the military will have to be used to restore law and order. But India has sufficient Indian armed forces at her command, not to require the assistance of the British army in

India. When friendly relations subsist between Britain and India, any sane statesman would have thought that the question of the withdrawal of the British army in India was a matter for friendly adjustment. But if Britain grudges the presence of its army here, India will certainly feel obliged by its removal straightaway.

X

THEY SHALL NOT PASS !

We are a peaceful people. We have been wanting peace and we have been praying for peace for years. To satisfy the Muslim League we conceded the Lucknow Pact, we agreed to Separate Electorates and accepted the Macdonald Award. We even accepted the Cabinet Statement in order to buy peace. But Mr. Jinnah will not let us have peace.

For full five years now I have told the country time and again that he is forcing a civil war on us. People who thought that I was a prophet of panic in 1942 have lived to see that I was right and that their hopes of peace were empty dreams.

There cannot be peace when one party wants to force a war on us at any cost. If Gandhiji, the prophet of non-violence, cannot win over this war-monger, none else can. We may utter platitudes about friendship in the hope that appeasement will allay the hunger. All these efforts are doomed to failure. They only prevent us from facing the truth as it is.

The naked truth is that nationalism in India to-day faces and has been facing for the last five

years a grave danger. Mr. Jinnah has again and again threatened national India with violence on his terms. Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan told us the other day that they would make us forget even the deeds of Chengiz Khan. He recently told us again that all of us must become converts to Islam. To-day Mr. Jinnah has told us with his well known vulgarity that Pandit Nehru, beloved of the country, is a donkey; that Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel, the indomitable leader of our struggle for independence, is an enemy.

Where in this country is there a resemblance of any peace ? With his single-mindedness Mr. Jinnah has left us no alternative. Either nationalism has to submit to him unconditionally or he will continue doing his best to force civil war on the country.

In such a situation, mere pious hopes have no place. The nation is faced with a grim future. We want peace. We will work for amity. But if a war is forced upon us we must accept the challenge. No nation can survive if it has not the courage, the stamina, the capacity to stand for itself.

Let us be friendly with friends. Let us be generous to those who want to be with us. Let us protect all those who are defenceless. But let us not delude ourselves with the hope that

peace is coming, when there is no peace. Such a step would be suicidal.

As a nation we are not aggressive, nor do we desire to be aggressive. But there are times when the truth must be told. We shall not be timid, we shall not be weak, we shall not be disorganised. We shall not wait for our destruction in the pious hope that someone will come to our rescue.

To-day our very existence as a nation is in peril. Let us stand up and resist the danger at all costs. India was one, is one and shall remain one—come war, come strife. That was the message of Malaviyaji, that is the message of Gandhiji, that is the message of every true patriot. To that message we are pledged, in life or in death.

XI

TRANSFER OF POPULATION :

A SIN AGAINST GOD AND MAN.

Mr. Jinnah talks of transfer of population pontifically. It is offered as a happy substitute for the present arrangement of the people in India for all those who want Pakistan, now and here.

This idea is not only impracticable ; it is most dangerous for peace, unity and progress. It will disturb the equilibrium of years. It will impose untold hardships on generations to come. It will root up the life of the village, the foundations of society and the culture of our race ; affecting political progress and economic security ; de-humanising men.

For those who fall foolishly in love with such a slogan, an article of Mr. R.H. Markham in the *Christian Science Monitor* is reproduced below:

K.M.M.

“More than 20,000,000 eastern Europeans are now being shifted from one province or nation to another and set up in new homes or in refugee camps. It is a transfer accompanied

by strong pressure, much suffering and some violence.

“Within this figure of 20,000,000 there is not included the inmates of displaced-persons’ camps who for political reasons do not wish to return home, nor members of Gen. Wladyslaw Andres’ Polish Army in exile. Neither does it include the European Jews seeking to settle abroad. It refers to nationals of defeated nations forced to evacuate certain territories and to nationals of victorious nations occupying those territories.

“The grim tragedy of the moment seems to be repeating, in some measure, the inhumanities which followed the march of dictators’ armies across Europe in the early days of the war. There are important differences. There are nuances of justification. But the total on human suffering from the transfer of population is great indeed.

“The most voluminous shift of men and women back and forth is taking place in Poland, where Wladyslaw Wolski, Vice-Minister in-charge of migration, says that 6,000,000 Poles are being settled in new homes.

“This means that at least the same number of other persons are moving out of those homes. Most of the migrating Poles come from what was eastern Poland and are being settled in East Prussia and what was eastern Germany. Also

half a million Ruthenians and White Russians are moving out of present-day Poland to the eastern Polish provinces which Russia annexed.

“In Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania, more than 6,000,000 persons have moved or will be required to move. The main beneficiaries in this vast population shift, extending from the Baltic Sea to Belgrade and Sarajevo in Yugoslavia, are Russians, Poles, Czechs and Slovaks, with Rumanians, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes picking up a few crumbs. The principal losers are Germans and Hungarians. A larger number of persons is moving out of the Slav countries than is moving in. Practically the whole of this family uprooting is taking place within the so-called Russian “sphere of security.

“If one could imagine twice as many persons as there are in the whole of Ireland suddenly forced to leave their homes, jobs, farms, churches, household goods and cities to resettle in foreign land, he would have a partial picture of what is happening to men and women in eastern Europe.

“One familiar with Irish history recalls that during the past, many thousands of outsiders have been forcibly settled in Ireland, after which in the course of time, many thousands of Irishmen settled abroad. One also may recall that this double shift of population provided no

permanent solution for any basic political problem, but aroused an enmity so deep that centuries have failed to obliterate it. The Irish in Ireland have not yet become reconciled to the settlement of outsiders there, nor have the Irish who emigrated forgotten their old enmities. Most people in the world, when shoved around, react as the Irish have. May one believe that the children or childrens of the European men and women now being driven from their ancestral homes, packed into crude cattle cars, and herded into overcrowded, inhospitable, insecure foreign settlements, will forget that experience?

“Will the tragedy not become ever more vivid with the passage of the years? Is this forced migration not piling up future trouble?”

“And the people who are being moved are for the greater part not recent colonists or new settlers, but ‘old-timers’. They have lived in the homes from which they are being expelled longer than white men have lived in America.

“If the 3,000,000 Americans were driven back to Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, Ireland and Czechoslovakia, with 20 dollars and a truck each, they probably would feel distressed even though all have been there less than 100 years and most less than 50 years. In contrast with this, the ancestors of most of the 3,000,000 Sudeten Germans being driven from Czechoslovakia settled there long before the time of Luther, while

ancestors of the Hungarians about to be forced from Slovakia were there when William the Conqueror invaded England, and the Germans in Rumania have been there for 300 years.

"Before World War II, there were about 1,000,000 Germans in Poland and, according to the Vice -Minister for Migration, about 1,000,000 still remain in new Poland, but all are to be expelled by the end of the present year. This means that the number of Germans who will have been removed from their homes by Russia and Poland by next Dec. 31 will be equal to the original million plus all in the annexed territories.

"East Prussia, which has been divided between Russia and Poland contained about 2,000,000 Germans. The area in eastern Germany from the Baltic to Czechoslovakia, which Poland annexed, was inhabited by at least 4,000,000 Germans.

"This means that 7,000,000 Germans formerly living in the Reich or Poland will have been forced to migrate or have been lost in the war. Among those who eventually will be migrants are many taken to Soviet Russia for forced labour. In many respects their lot is even worse than that of the present refugees and their future is equally dark.

"As the millions of emigrants from Poland reach devastated overcrowded Germany, they meet the 3,000,000 coming from Czechoslovakia, the 500,000 from Hungary and the remnants

of the 500,000 who used to inhabit Yugoslavia. A German, Joseph Cardinal Erings, is reported to have placed the number of German immigrants at 14,000,000.

“Many Hungarians face or indeed already experience a similar fate. The Government of Czechoslovakia has expressed its determination to expel all Hungarians from that country who are not willing to become Slavs, not only in citizenship, but in heart and in culture. The Hungarians’ minority is in danger. No such thing as a minority right is even to be discussed.

“These Hungarian fugitives from a new kind of racism will be taken to an overcrowded, devastated land with no superfluous food supplies and a tragic deficiency of jobs. How many of them there will be, one cannot say exactly. Before the war, there were more than 600,000 Magyars in Slovakia. How many of them Prague will accept as Slavs is uncertain. Probably most of them will have to leave and will prefer exile to denationalisation. The Hungarians are known as persistent nationalists.

“Marshal Tito has intimated that he, too, is planning to expel Hungarians from Yugoslavia. They are probable 400,000 in number. Many Rumanians are determined to drive most of the million and a half Hungarians out of Rumania,

though the Bucharest Government still is decidedly against it. Among the many problems facing Hungary, this prospective influx of refugees from abroad is one of the most serious.

"Anyone reflecting upon the present suffering of homeless Germans and Hungarians will recall that those nations launched the World War and they brutally persecuted Jews and others. It is also a fact that Germans and Magyars have caused much trouble to the Slavs; the Czechs and Poles hope to make themselves secure after centuries of bitter conflict by driving into wretched exile more than 6,000,000 of their rivals.

"But whether peace will be served by cruel reprisals upon helpless women and children may be doubted. And that security can be won by acts that arouse mass hatred is far from certain. If even the partitioning of weak Poland never made Germany safe, can the sending out of 3,000,000 destitute Sudeten Germans to tell their woes to 75,000,000 other Germans make Czechoslovakia safe?"

SECTION III

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

1. A CREATIVE EDUCATION FOR INDIA
2. THE INADEQUACY OF MODERN EDUCATION
3. THE INDIAN STUDENT
4. A CHALLENGE TO WESTERNISM
5. FORMATIVE EDUCATION
6. SANSKRIT AS A FACTOR IN FORMATIVE EDUCATION
7. DANGERS OF A NARROW SCHOLARSHIP
8. ESSENTIAL UNITY OF INDIAN CULTURE
9. EXPRESSION AS A FORMATIVE PROCESS
10. STUDENT AS AN ARTIST OF SELF-SCULPTURE
11. THE SUPREME ART OF LIFE

I

A CREATIVE EDUCATION FOR INDIA

I have for thirty years some contact with education in many of its aspects ; with the University of Bombay, with Colleges, High Schools and *Pathshalas* ; with institutions like the David Sassoon Industrial School, the Chembur Home Vocational School and the Mansukhlal Chhaganlal School of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. Though not a teacher myself, I have come into contact with teachers of all grades. But more than that I have been a typical product of our university education ; and it has taken me years of effort to get rid of its grip and realise the importance of a truly creative education.

The education which India has been receiving for the last one hundred and fifty years is neither Indian nor creative. Even at its best it is not Western. It started as a political device and has been continued as a political makeshift. Macaulay, when he founded modern education in India, frankly wanted convenient instruments of British rule.

The object did succeed. It has created a class of English-knowing Indians who know

little of India except through their master's eyes. They have been rightly described as the "*manas-putras*" of the British: children born of the British mind. This class basking in the sunshine of foreign rule, which they considered "a dispensation of a wise Providence", looked upon their own people as more or less inferior, uncivilised people.

Modern education in India has been a failure. The extreme emphasis which it lays on the mastery of English exposes its true intent. An Indian, passing through a University, becomes a suitable middle-man with an outlook and ways congenial to his foreign masters. As lawyer, doctor, scientist or businessman, he helps the British to make him forget the morally devastating effects of foreign rule.

English, no doubt, is the predominantly international language; through its medium we can contact the rest of the world. But this is an incidental advantage. In fact, an intensive study of English has denied to our souls the sap which they would have otherwise drawn from the use of our own language.

The second feature of modern education in India is that it is purely informative. It is also a feature of recent educational tendencies in Europe and America. A graduate, therefore, to grow a waste-basket of useless bits of

information. The only effect is harmful ; it initiates the student in second hand Westernism.

Another and the most dangerous feature of modern education is its tendency to induce an inferiority complex in us. It is the legacy of the missionary zeal which, in the early days of British rule, tried to foist a crude European Culture on our ancient and highly developed Culture. This was done in the belief that the souls of Indians, who were taken to be savages, had to be saved. English, as a result, became the symbol of a new aristocracy and trousers the badge of civilisation. In some decades of the last century eating beef and drinking wine were considered signs of being above the level of the uncivilized rest. If truth had to be inculcated, we were referred to Washington, as if we had not Harishchandra. If persistency had to be admired, one had to go to Robert Bruce and his spiders, as if we had no Pratap and no Guru Govind Singh. If we were taught anything about our own Country and Culture, it was with an arrogant and hypercritical attitude. And our present generation of educationists brought up under these influences have not yet been able to get rid of them fully.

Teaching of Indian history is not only un-historic but positively criminal. Histories of India, till very recently, were written and taught from a foreign point of view. We were

told about foreign invasions of India but nothing about how we resisted them. We were told about the evils of our social system ; we were not taught, as we should have been, how this system came into existence and how it happened to be the most tenacious social organisation, which, while it protected life and culture, also developed an elasticity unknown in other parts of the world. We had pages on Alexander's campaign on India ; but we were told next to nothing of the contemporary empire of the Shishunagas and the Nandas, and the greatest Culture of the age which it represented. We are given lurid details of the palace intrigues of the Sultans of Dehli ; but we are not enlightened as to how, for centuries, heroes and heroines resisted the might of the Central Asian invaders who flung themselves on this land. We are told on the " Mutiny of 1857"—the British lieutenants' word for the event—and of how the brave foreigners crushed it. It is only outside our Universities that we learn that it was a great national revolt, when Hindus and Muslims rallied round the last Moghul Emperor of Delhi, the national symbol, to drive out the foreigner. No wonder the product of modern education knows nothing of his country's greatness. It is intended that he should not know it.

Creative Education must make our young men really Indian, strong, true and free—an embodiment of the finest in his Culture ; and

authentic representative of India, the teacher of nations, with a message of humanity.

In order to discover the fundamental of such an education we must begin the search with an entirely fresh outlook. In doing so we must take the stand-point of India; we must evoke the genius of our Culture. We may not be partial to ourselves, but in any event we must be true to ourselves. We must get rid of inferiority complex. By the Self alone, can the Self be raised.

In approaching the objects of *Bharatiya Shiksha*, therefore, we must first consider India. If we want to raise the world, like Archimedes, we must have a place to stand on. That place can only be *Bharata*, the Mother land. In the first instance, therefore, the teacher and the student must become 'India-conscious'.

objective method of education in our institution.

Creative education which draws its substance from our culture is on firm ground. It is formative in character, it rejects mere acquisition of knowledge, and recognises that self-discipline and consecration are necessary to enable a student to develop a personality which grows as he grows older.

The deterioration of education all the world over is mainly due to electivism. This word connotes that all subjects have an equal educational value. In modern educational systems, it has transferred the emphasis from classical and historical studies to experimental and social sciences. This movement is not restricted to India ; we are only aping Western fashions in education. It is the off-spring of Westernism—the way of life evolved in Europe as a result of materialistic tendencies, which has made a fetish of experimental and social sciences.

No doubt science has been making rapid progress and it is necessary for every educated man to possess technical knowledge. The needs of national survival also render it imperative that we must have scientific equipments of the latest type and the capacity to develop them so as to be abreast of other nations. But that is no reason why we should sell our souls

to Westernism by accepting electivism in our educational system.

As a result of electivism being popular multiple course are laid down in several varieties of subjects. The underlying assumption is that knowledge of elementary Chemistry has the same formative value for the student as the study of literary masterpiece or the history of India, Greece or Rome. It was once seriously contended in the University of Bombay that the study of the mother-tongue was superfluous. Indian history, a study of which has so great a formative value, is being replaced by that of world history. It is forgotten that mechanical and uninspiring memorising of a host of facts relating to other lands and peoples, cannot have the same value for the Indian student as the history of his own land.

Electivism goes further. It claims that the teacher or the parent can decide whether a child, in his teens, is fit to take up arts, science, commerce or law. The bifurcation, which at one time was at the post-intermediate stage, is now being pushed back to the matriculation stage; attempts are made to push it even still further, to the extremely unripe stage of the fourth standard. The result is that the organic unity of education, provided by a minimum general course of studies has been disappearing.

Modern education, in consequence, has

largely ceased to be formative. It fails to teach permanent values to man and only arms him with more effective weapons. A man educated under this system may not be a man of culture despite being equipped with scientific knowledge and skill. He is, generally, an under-developed man though a super developed mechanic ; a technological creature. His interests are narrow. He is trained to look at life from the angle of his special subject which he has chosen or which is chosen for him. He has no equipment for a complete life, his moral values are warped.

Such men have built up the militant organisation of materialism and developed a characteristic way of life, Westernism. They find in show and sensation the joy of life. They have destroyed the sanctity of home and stood for easy and swift divorce. They deride self-discipline, for otherwise they cannot justify their lack of responsibility. They scorn moral values and the possibility of a higher destiny for man. They admit nothing higher than the knowledge which subserves the immediate practical ends of changing externals. Such men have staged purges, mass murders, Belsen horrors, the wicked displacement of men, women and children by millions. Where they have not destroyed, they have established soulless regimentation. They have thus forced on the world a moral crisis.

If this crisis has to be tided over, the world must go back to formative education. At the early college stage, intensive study of definite subjects of purely cultural interest are necessary to make the student responsive to the higher values of life.

This is what creative education aims at.

III

THE INDIAN STUDENT

The first condition of a sound education of the creative type is to take our stand on India. In its political aspect, this stand may be called national. But Indian nationalism is not a narrow political creed as in Europe. Politics after all is a restricted sphere of life. Our nationalism is a group sentiment of wider significance. It is the sentiment of devotion and sacrifice which surrounds Bharata, the Motherland.

I once described this national standpoint as follows :

“To those of us who have faith in Indian nationalism, India is the Mother, not an estate to be divided. Its driving force has been the joy of suffering for the sake of the Mother, the divine ‘*ananda*’ of self-immolation for her freedom, the bliss of union in death with the forebears of our race who have done so before us. We have felt almost physical delight in the touch of the soil from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin—the land of the Mother; in the kisses blown by the winds from over Indian seas : in hearing Indian speech, music and poetry, wherever found; in seeing the familiar sites, habits

and manners of life in every corner of it. The pride in the Mother's past, the anguish at her present servitude, the passion for her future glory have been the breath of our life. To us nationalism is the realization of the Mother in the country; the contemplation, adoration and service of the Motherland as Divinity."

Creative education must take its stand firmly on India, the Mother, on the living Nation whose soul is inspired by a unique culture. It cannot therefore accept the aims, ideals and methods of the anglicized nineteenth century. Nor can it ignore the spirit, the history and the destiny of our people. It cannot make a fetish of our past, neither can it be blind to the fact that the present and the future are, and must be, the outcome of our past.

India cannot accept the present day Westernistic education, organisation and equipment forced on her by Britain. Unlike the imitative Japanese we do not desire to reproduce in ourselves a second-hand energy, outlook and technical skill. Just as we decline to accept for the Motherland the political status of an outlying dependency of the British Empire, so must we refuse to be the repository of stale ideas and methods of the decadent West. India must be Indian and not a second-hand West. The education that is to create our new generation, must therefore be built on the foundation

of our own culture. For, it is a way of life characteristically ours. It is *Dharam*, not in the sense of religion a mere theological dogma, cult or ritual but in the sense of an all-pervading force which upholds life.

Indian culture, again, is not merely Aryan culture but very much more, though the latter glistens like a thread of gold through many and varied elements which now go to make up our way of life. We cannot repudiate the Gandhara art because of Greek influence. We cannot disown the Taj Mahal because of its Islamic inspiration. We cannot reject the art, the manners, the institutions which Hindu-Muslim adjustments have given birth to. We cannot even throw off the Western influence and institutions which have grown into our life. Our culture is a living force. It absorbs alien elements when necessary, but transmutes them into a new pattern of homogeneous richness. It is, therefore, a tremendous force of power and beauty which made us what we are in the world of to-day, and will make us what we want to be in the world of tomorrow.

A student under the influence of creative education is the crucible through which the culture has to pass in order to acquire fresh vigour. To secure the best of students for this vital process, the *Smritis* enjoin that learning shall be imported to whoever seeks it without receiving monetary return.

The modern world, under Westernistic influence, has elevated money into a divinity. Men of learning think in terms of money and a rising cost of living. Entry into educational institutions, more often than not, depends upon the fees that a student can afford. Our universities impose handicaps on education which would be considered criminal in any society where values were not hopelessly perverted. The cost involved in luxurious buildings, excellent furniture, costly equipment and security deposits, place education beyond the reach of the deserving poor student.

It has not yet come to be recognised that it is the fundamental duty of the state in India, as elsewhere, to provide the costliest education free to the deserving student. In the meantime, however, we must, as far as our means permit, uphold the first principle that no promising young man of character, who believes in India and her culture, should be left without modern educational equipment by reason merely of want of funds.

A student is promising only if he is proud of his country and anxious to learn what his culture stands for. He would aspire to learn, to grow and to achieve. He would not be blinded by arrogance and think that he had done wonders or that he alone could do them.

Such a student has no future. Towards all great thing and men, a true student must be reverent; toward teachers, respectful; toward knowledge, humble. He must have the spirit of Arjuna, the true student, "I am Thy pupil : I have come to Thee : Give me Thy Command."

A Westernist, a person steeped in Westernism believes in nothing beyond the limits of his sense-perceptions, which he calls knowledge. He only believes in change from without. His only faith is that every ill can and will be cured by external revolution. If he can radically and swiftly re-organise the environments and change the system of production and distribution, the world will be a paradise over-night. There need be no art of creative self-culture patiently pursued. But the world upside down and all that one wants will be forthcoming.

This is the end for which Westernism is striving. Its votaries believe that this end justifies all means including violence, baseness, treachery, poison, superssion of individual life, domestic sanctity and national independence. They have an implicit faith that at some time or the other their methods, based on force and fraud will alter egotism, brutishness, violence and untruth in men.

The only permanent value which they recognise is their faith in change and their conviction that whosoever believes in anything else is an escapist, a reactionary or an antirevolutionary and must be eliminated by all means.

Under the influence of Westernism, education, naturally is not formative but informative and coercive. There is no individual growth, only patternisation. The teacher and the taught are

either a drill instructor and a recruit, or a policeman and a criminal. And the pattern has to be laid down by those in political power and enforced by the might of the state. Individuality of the student has to be crushed into shape. There can be no art of self-sculpture; no liberty to develop oneself on the lines of one's own nature ; no duty to be true to himself; no inalienable *swabhava*. His is to do and die; to fly an aeroplane, to discover a deadly poison, to search a deadlier ray so that who are his masters might enslave the rest.

Indian culture is a challenge to Westernism. It recognises three fundamental and inalienable positions :

First, every man has his own individual nature, *Swabhava*.

Second, self-fulfilment for him is only attainable on the lines of its own law or *Swadharma*.

Third, self-fulfilment for him lies in co-ordinating his faculties under the impelling urge of this law by a course of self discipline and thereby attaining an integration of all his powers which we call personality.

The faith of Indian culture is clear. The destiny of man lies in his perfection by individual growth. External changes are useful only to

the extent to which they secure conditions in which such growth becomes easy. Ends cannot justify means. Ends and means are one and inseverable, a mere pursuit of truth as one sees it. Thus pursuit alone invests a human being with dignity and freedom. The changes inspired by greed, lust, fear and hate or achieved by fraud or force, are self-destructive.

This faith determines the scope of creative education. The primary task is to find the *Swabhava* of the student and then to develop and purify it. A mere change in the outward conduct of the student without corresponding inner change leads nowhere. His powers and faculties must, therefore, be stimulated so that he can express his life-energy with power and beauty on Indian lines.

In order to achieve this result the student must become an active centre of cultural reintegration.

The process of cultural reintegration is like the process of nutrition which regenerates the living tissues from day to day. A student of culture first studies it and becomes reception centre. He then absorbs its finest elements, if the culture is not alien. This makes him true to himself, his country and his culture. He, in the next stage, tries to live upto them under the conditions of his age. As soon as he does this, he becomes an active centre of rein-

A CHALLENGE TO WESTERNISM

tegration. He radiates the permanent value of his culture; influences his environments and produces a healthy renaissance by establishing contact with alien influences.

He then grows rich in personality and dynamic effectiveness. And the culture passing through the crucible of the student's individual nature, will be an organic creation fresh with life and tenacious and powerful with its ancient strength. This is reintegration.

Changes in the environments, or substitution of one set of environments by another—whether economic or political—cannot transform the nature of the individual. That can only be done by creative educational treatment.

FORMATIVE EDUCATION

It was recognised by Indian experts from the earliest times that education must be primarily formative. But for this character, the magnificence, continuity and vitality of Indian culture would not have been possible.

What is formative education? It is a process whereby the student creates himself; a process of creative self-culture. It is an art by which life energy is so sharpened and developed that with every effort and at the earliest it attains a higher stage of self-fulfilment.

Everyman feels himself inadequate, incomplete and unhappy. Self-fulfilment implies:

- (1) a sense of completeness, freedom and growing perfection ;
- (2) a capacity which brings love and achievement in greater measure ;
- (3) a strength which rises superior to human weakness, and ;
- (4) an incorrect perspective of the unity and goal of life.

If education is creative self-sculpture, the would-be artist is the fresh student. Like all aspiring artists, therefore, he must acquire three qualifications, *viz* ;

- (1) the knowledge of the materials he is working with ;
- (2) the vigour to acquire craftsmanship by persistent and enthusiastic effort ; and
- (3) the view of the final pattern which he has to produce.

Unfortunately in the art of self-sculpture, the aspiring artist is a fresh youngman of unformed habits. During this age he is generally denied the atmosphere of a home where parents practise idealism and teach consecration. The material with which he is to work is also his own individual nature of which he has little or no knowledge. The vigour and enthusiasm required to learn the art is, more often than not, dissipated by Westernistic influences which have taught him to look to self alone and to mistake irresponsibility for strength. And worst of all he has no pattern to work up to ; and if he has one at all it is generally wrong.

Creative education must take into account these difficulties and provide three essential conditions :

First, it must sharpen the instruments of

knowledge and train the student to precision, *analysis*, concentration and responsiveness to noble impulses.

Second, it must train him to co-ordinate his faculties for concentrated work.

Third, it must train him to express himself under the guidance of teacher and the inspiration of masters in the art of self-sculpture who have moulded the culture of his land.

These conditions are only satisfied if the ground is prepared by an intensive study of the life stories of national heroes ; of the history and culture of his country ; and of literary masterpieces.

The fundamental postulates of creative education are :

First, every man has his individual nature which circumscribes the nature and scope of his possibilities.

Second, his nature is a composite product of his individual talents and aptitudes ; his heredity and environments ; the associations which spring from his relations to his society and his country ; the imponderable influences of his soil, of the sights, sounds and habits of his native land, and above all, of the culture to which he is

These factors are not all-apparent, but all the same they form part of his sub-conscious nature. Creative education, therefore, takes its stand on the fact that nothing alien to the individual nature of a student can be taught. A teacher is not a drill instructor. He is not a task-master. He can be a guide and can only lead forth the talents of the student. He can encourage his efforts to be an artist of self-sculpture. He can by precept, example, atmosphere and emphasis evoke the spirit of creative art in the student.

Every man, therefore, is bound by his individual nature. It is the marble on which he has to carve. Its possibilities can be brought out, its grains smoothed, and its contours shaped to beauty. But its character and possibilities must limit his creative efforts. When the teacher recognises this fact his attempts to influence these efforts will bear fruit.

The grains and possibilities of the granite are mainly the products of cultural forces operating upon the individual through heredity, environments and experience. The first step, therefore, in creative education is to teach the student to study, express and live upto the permanent values of his creative culture.

Indian culture is not the same thing as the material equipment of life in India, which is civilisation. Cultural values are permanent,

they are an end in themselves. Civilisation is the garb of life ; only the means to lead an efficient life. We are superior to Shri Ram Chandra in civilisation. We travel in aeroplanes ; he travelled in canoes or on foot. But in absolute values, in truth, in idealism, in character, in the beauty with which human relations were maintained, he would be a bold man indeed who will say he is superior to Shri Ram-Chandra.

Each nation has its *distinctive* culture which forms the source of its strength. Our culture is an organic growth, native to the soil, history and the central ideas round which the national life has revolved for generations. Many educated Indians once tried to ape British dress, manners and habits ; some of them do so still. But they have failed in their attempt to force an alien culture upon themselves or others. Only when they sought self-fulfilment by living upto the values of Indian culture did they become true to themselves and succeeded in giving strength to the group life.

Shri Aravinda spent his growing years in England imbibing the best in Westernism. But soon Indian culture asserted itself. He gave up foreign dress and ways of living. He studied Indian languages and literature. And only when he tried to perfect himself in the art of creative life, peculiarly Indian, that he became a great

apostle of modern Indian nationalism, a great living Indian thinker and a *Yogi*.

Gandhiji was educated for a Bar in England. But his sub-conscious self declined to take to Westernism. He had to recapture the fundamentals of Indian culture for himself, before he became the architect of resurgent India, challenged Westernism, and stood out as a supreme artist of creative life-energy.

Formative education in India therefore must follow the lines of our culture. Any foreign culture as an education force is full of danger.

VI

SANSKRIT AS A FACTOR IN FORMATIVE EDUCATION

The study of Sanskrit need not involve the mastery of grammar. An elementary knowledge is sufficient. What is required is the general knowledge of the history of its literature; a familiarity with the classical masterpieces, if necessary with the aid of translations in Indian language; and lastly, an intensive study of a few masterpieces.

It is further believed that a student going up for science or technical course does not need Sanskrit. Why? Is not scientist a man? Has he no need to appreciate beauty or philosophy without which life is a burden? Should he deny himself the art of making love or building a beautiful home or elevating all relations of life into a harmony? Will his soul never aspire to heroism, consecration or self-fulfilment?

Science and technical skill are equipments; self-sculpture on the other hand is an essential art of life, an end. And a study of Sanskrit is a basic necessity for this art.

Westernism has taught us false values. The technological creature which modern education

is breeding, is the result of a wicked belief that it is not necessary for an average man to master the art of life. The truth is that scientific equipment and culture are not mutually exclusive. If the world wants to escape the horrors of the atomic age, the scientist must be first and foremost a man of culture, an artist in self-sculpture. His vocation, to him, is but an instrument of a self-fulfilment to be attained, not with the dire weapons of an angry Jove but with the integration of a Budha.

The destiny of man cannot be allowed to be frustrated by an exclusive emphasis on scientific knowledge and skill and a neglect of the permanent value of culture.

Creative Education must bring back the modern mind to this position. The importance of classical studies in general and the study of Sanskrit in particular, cannot be exaggerated ; they give the student an insight into the permanent values of culture. It enables him to appraise works of art and literature, social and political theories and movements, individual and collective action in a proper perspective. Finally, it imparts faith in the dignity of man and the supremacy of the Moral Order. It gives a living touch with the highest vision of beauty and sublimity given to man.

Classical studies came into disrepute a little before World War I in England and America and

were progressively substituted by alternative courses in sciences. This was largely due to the triumph of the machine age, which was generally held to be a flowering of human evolution. Science and vocational arts, therefore, naturally gained a disproportionate popularity. Like apes we followed suit and began to neglect the study of classics in our educational system.

The economic crisis which preceded World War I, however, undermined confidence in the belief that the empirical sciences were self-sufficient. This war left us staggered at the unimaginable barbarities which the machine age had produced. It is now felt by thinking men that the gradual neglect of formative studies has been reducing the educated human into a savage without scruples but with weapons of illimitable destructiveness. Electivism is now being severely criticised both in America and England. Attempts are being made to prevent vocational courses from crowding out liberal studies from the curricula of schools and colleges. Education, in consequence, is being re-defined in emphasized terms of formative training.

The definition of education given by Derry, the President of Mary Grove College, Michigan, emphasises the new points of view:—

“ Education means the full and harmonious development and artistically effective expression

of all the seven faculties of powers of man (senses, imagination, mechanical and intellectual memory, intellect, emotions and will) to be achieved by the pupil's own personal practice or conscious exercise of each specific power, under the guidance of teachers, and the help of divine grace, in preparation for the highest life here and hereafter."

The moral re-armament—M.R.A.,—known as the Oxford group, is a world movement which hopes to restore education and life to its older values.

In India our cultural traditions have so far exercised a restraining influence on our zeal for going in for methods which are being cast out from the West. But it must be realised that Sanskrit studies are comparatively more vital for us than classical studies in America or England. Sanskrit – the language which Sir Willam Jones pronounced to be more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either—is a living influence in our life. Its study is an inspiring factor in making us more Indian than what we are.

I am not indifferent to the study of modern Indian languages. I cannot be. For thirty-five years now, I have given my best to Gujarati. My faith in Hindi as the national language of

India is unshaken. I have admired the piquancy and raciness of Marathi and the grace of Bengali. I know the historical value of Pali and Ardhamagadhi. But as a truly formative and inspiring influence, nothing can compare with the study of Sanskrit.

VII

DANGERS OF A NARROW SCHOLARSHIP

Culture, so long as it is living, passes through the process of re-integration from generation to generation. But all the time it remains the same. There is no break in its self-conscious existence. Its fundamental outlook on the pattern of life does not change. Mere study of Sanskrit is, therefore, incomplete without the study of Indian Culture as a living whole.

Studies conducted under our old *Pathshala* System gave textual knowledge, tradition and religious belief but only as a set form. It gives no connected view of the culture. No historic and critical knowledge is provided which will enable the student to distinguish between its permanent values and transient aspects. The process of *absorption*, in consequence, is arrested. The old forms of culture are accepted as eternal. It is not thought of in terms of re-integration.

On the other hand modern education in India assumes that Indian culture is dead, requiring post-mortem dissection, new culture can be

West. No attention is paid to the importance of a ceaseless re-integration. If India is living, a nation with a distinctive culture as its soul, ceaseless integration of its culture is inevitable. Otherwise, like ancient Egypt and Greece, she would have been dead. If again, this re-integration is an essential factor in our development, it must be purposive and carried out by a planned effort at Creative Education.

A post-mortem examination of India's past, therefore, is not the study of her culture. Dissection gives the body in sections; it does not give the living man. Many scholars even look at our history in periods—Ancient, Medieval, Modern—each as a separate unit, as if the world began and ended with it. This kind of study is often dignified by the name of 'objective' or scientific. But an objective and scientific study of a living thing can be made only when it discovers the central, continuous urge of which the apparent life is a mere expression and the body but an outward symbol.

Indian culture must be studied as an unbroken organic phenomenon, as a flowing stream. Of the stream, the invasions, the rise and fall of empires, the conflict of political ambitions have been but crest-waves. Foreign invasions and alien influences, like noisy tributaries and turbid rivulets, have joined it at several points of time. But it has never ceased

to flow as one stream. Its waters have been flowing between the Hindukush, the Himalayas and the Sea. Its essential unity, its characteristic elements, its direction and the driving forces, all have remained the same. This unity and continuity have given India her individual nature. The culture, therefore, must be studied not in sections but in continuous time.

An individual episode or period must, no doubt, be analysed and under the ruling ideas of our culture have been seeking fulfilment. Unless we go into the continuous working of these forces and processes, our study must remain superficial, mechanical and almost meaningless.

When a catastrophe overtakes a nation and deprives it of the capacity to preserve and reintegrate its culture, this flowing continuity is broken and the culture dies, as it did in ancient Egypt and ancient Greece. Often it is not broken but is lost sight of, as when in the nineteenth century, educated Indians forgot that we had anything like it. Sometimes, if the culture is tough, the past is accepted as something permanent with a view to protect it from the onrushing catastrophe. In and after the fourteenth century, in India, the ruthless raids of the Central Asian

invaders arrested life. Our universities were destroyed and the living traditions of education, scholarship and life were broken up. The cherished past was treated as all important; the present was ignored: the future was thought of only in terms of a revival of the past. The impermanent forms of our culture naturally came to be accepted as its permanent values. It was not an effort at re-integration but at preservation in cold storage.

Our modern scholarship, in imitation of Western scholarship, looks upon the study of Indian culture as the study of a laboratory specimen, something dead and gone and finished which is not under an active process of re-integration.

VIII

ESSENTIAL UNITY OF INDIAN CULTURE

The Battle of Taorari (1192 A.D.) in which Prithviraj fell and the Turks won cannot be understood except in the context of the Indian culture of the period. Prithviraj was the descendant of a feudatory of what was once the mighty empire ruled by Pratiharas from Kanauj. He inherited the weaknesses of that decadent fabric and the human and civilized traditions of Indian warfare, both of which were suddenly faced with ruthless savagery. But when he fell, the traditions were not cut short. Social and cultural urges were not dead. After his death Ranthambhor, Patan and a thousand other citadels resisted. A fiery, long, drawn-out contest between foreign invaders and the heroes of the soil continued. Pratap and Shivaji were but the crest-waves of the resistance of their respective epochs. The Hindu resurgence during the reign of Aurangzeb was not an isolated phenomenon, but the product of processes in operation during centuries. Britain tried to exploit the processes to its advantages; we cannot understand Akhand Hindustan and Pakistan except in terms of these processes. How can one study the battle

of Taorari or the life of Prithviraj as an isolated exhibit in time and space.

We view a man's life as patched up pieces joined together as in cinema film. We reproduce the things he did, said or wrote, but we do not study his personality. But personality is the expression, in a limited space of time, of all the life forces dominant ideas in the men which are largely created by the culture which is rushing forward at every moment through time.

You or I cannot be treated as little isolated periods of existence to be studied independently. I cannot understand myself except as an expression of life-force which has been influenced by Gandhiji; shaped by some proximity to Besant, Tilak and Shri Arvinda, by an ardent admiration for Vivekanand, Dayanand Saraswati, Shri Ramkrishna, Sahajanand, by the urge provided by the Gita and the Yogasutra, and above all by my study of Indian Culture and the memories of Rishis which my mother and the *Puraniks* filled me with.

But were Dayanand and Sahajanand representing Indian culture at the Dawn of the Modern period like Brahma self-originated? Certainly not. Dayanand carried forward the life-work of Virjanand, Swaminarayan that of his *Guru* Ramdas and through him

of Ramanuja, who himself was an heir to an ancient cultural tradition.

Indian culture must, therefore, be viewed as the movement of a Central Idea flowing through time, absorbing alien influences, some times running underground but always inspiring individuals and movements to express it under the changed conditions of their time. In each period it has expressed itself, with easily ascertainable permanence, in the life of our great men, in the output of our art and literature, in our solution of vital problems. This Central Idea is a living reality. Men have derived exquisite joy by living it. It has passed through fresh coverings of each age. These coverings—the out-worn sheaths—are made the objects of research by our modern scholars. But the moving reality has passed from covering to covering throwing up great men and recurring movements with every age. This reality must be studied in forces, movements, motives and ideas which have persisted through time. It must be rediscovered by each generation; and above all, lived.

When we say that India has survived, we do not mean that so many million square miles have remained geologically locked up between the Himalayas and the sea. It means that the idea controlling our culture still provides the

inspiring urge which shapes men to find self-realization in and by expressing it.

This central idea is that the goal of human effort is the absolute integration of the human personality.

University education, if it provides a new up-to-date sheath for the Idea is a necessity. If it kills, the Idea dies, the Culture too dies, and with it the Nation.

IX

EXPRESSION AS A FORMATIVE PROCESS

The principal aim of modern education in India is to discover and manipulate the forces of nature. It has, therefore, come to regard the power of expression as of secondary importance.

At one time, in Europe, Rhetoric was a subject of prime importance in all educational curricula. In India, we had an elaborate system under which the power of expression was scrupulously developed. Before World War I, even our Universities laid stress on this aspect of education. But during the last twenty years this system is being replaced. Classical and literary studies are coming to be considered unessential or out of date. The study of expression, oral or written, is often considered a waste of time.

Creative education considers the development of the powers of expression as the greatest factor in formative training. A student anxious to acquire the art of creative self-sculpture has to fulfil two conditions :

First, he has to acquire the mastery of the

finest pieces of literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres ; and

Second, he has to train himself to express his feelings, thoughts and ideals by systematic efforts to copy the technique of these matters.

When a student learns the contents of a book, the literary history of its form, the biography of the author or the facts connected with the subject contained in it, his attitude is only receptive. The formative processes have not set in. But when an immortal work of beauty is intensively studied by way of analysis; repetition and reconstruction, the masterpiece, so to say, works itself in his moral and intellectual fibre, and his passive attitude disappears. Further when he is set a lesson in composition on the work, an active creative process is set in motion. He, therefore, summons the expressive art at his disposal. He passes the different elements gathered in his memory through his own imagination, and marshalls them to achieve the effect. In expressing his thoughts, feelings and images in his own words he tries to recreate the author's attitude and style. In doing so he goes through an intensive process whereby his mind imagination and aesthetic sense is moulded.

A mere mastery of the contents of a book and its intensive study are two different things.

The essence of an intensive study are, the analysis of its structure; a repetition and memorising of its notable passages; discussion of its merits; class exercise written and oral; and independent compositions dealing with the text. Analysis gives an insight into the structure of expression. The repetition of favourite passages forms the taste. Criticisms of passages in accordance with well-shaped canons of style lead to the habit of precision, accuracy and methodical presentation. By imitating select passages, the power of both imagination and reasoning are trained and the secret of acquiring mastery over other minds by persuasion and eloquence, is acquired.

In this connection the greatest handicap for a fresh student is the emphasis which, at an initial stage, is often placed on the formal study of grammar. Dr. Bhandarkar's text books of Sanskrit, for instance, by their insistence on teaching rules of grammar first, ruined the popularity of Sanskrit studies in our Universities. The student is first asked to cram the rules of grammar, though at that stage he does not understand what exactly the rule is or how it is to be applied. The study of grammar must be postponed to an early familiarity with the language.

An other method of teaching texts, which deprives the study of all-formative influence, is

to provide a translation or a paraphrase. Many teachers have made cheap money by providing bad translations, or worse paraphrases and thereby supplying 'ponies', to use the college slang of America. The teacher is happy with having provided the student with a pony. The student is equally happy that he has not to walk. And naturally, the poor boy acquires neither the strength to walk nor the art of walking with grace.

For a real formative study of a literary text, Mallinath's method is the best. In his commentaries on Sanskrit works, a paragraph is first taken; a brief summary of it is given; in a few words the connection with the foregoing passage is established. Then each line is taken up. The other words are given; the grammatical construction is explained; paralld quotations are supplied; special beauties are pointed out; and at the end, the whole passage is again summarised.

More or less similiar has been the method of prelection adopted by the Jesuits out of their world experience as educators :—

1. The content of a passage is summarised and its relation to the foregoing passage is stated.
2. Vocabulary, the grammar, the word order and subordinate connections are

explained and the difficulties are solved.

3. The syntax and style are commented on.
4. Allusions, names, etc., are briefly explained.
5. A partial or complete translation or paraphrase is given.
6. The figure of speech, the quality in style are explained and artistic reproduction of the passage is given.
7. Finally, a stylistic reproduction by the student based on the passage to be studied, is insisted on.

No doubt this will throw on the teacher the burden of more diligent preparation than what the modern teacher is prepared to undertake.

A teacher may well complain that courses, these days, are so extensive that they are not capable of being taught in this way; that time is too much taken up by the variety of subjects prescribed; that there is not sufficient time left for such an intensive training. But let the truth be realised. The development of a student's faculties cannot be fully attained without an intensive study of texts involving a mastery of expression. If the teacher fails to adopt the method indicated even in parts, the student must adopt it himself.

What I have stated about classical literary masterpieces, is more true of the master-pieces in one's own language. A mother tongue is an essential part of our being. Learning expression through a study of the literary masters who have invested the mother tongue with beauty and effectiveness is, therefore, an important step in education. An educated man is one who can speak and write his own language with accuracy and force. Indian students are at a disadvantage as they have been deprived of this basic education for a century.

Modern education has gone wrong in not realising the formative importance of literary studies. Creative education must restore it.

X

THE STUDENT AS AN ARTIST OF SELF-SCULPTURE

If the *Guru* has his duties, so has the *Shishya*. The modern student suffers from vanity which prevents him from developing humility and receptivity. They are, however, the pre-conditions of self-development.

This vanity is largely the result of westernistic influence. Over many young men, it casts a temporary spell and destroys all sense of responsibility. The 'gay-dog' attitude then becomes for him a badge of superiority.

Power politics, again, have created the need for a large number of active men to carry on party propaganda and in schools and colleges it has found a cheap and easy recruiting-ground for raw, unthinking partisans. To shout slogans, to run about under a belief that release of energy is organisation, to do something loud and out of the way, easily appear heroism, patriotism or service to young men scarcely out of teens. Young men can thus easily be deluded into the belief that they are making history when all that they are doing is

to become the victims of a carefully planned party propaganda. A student in ignorance gives to some local party chief the loyalty which he should have given to his teachers. But the student's paramount duty is clear. He has first to go through the process of fashioning himself. The duties of a citizen can wait till he leaves college.

Education, as a creative art, must evolve the best in the student. It must develop all his faculties and set him on the path where he can master the art of self-sculpture. It, therefore, requires that the student should adopt the three essential attitudes of studenthood : reverence, the spirit of inquiry and the spirit of service.

In every man who has some cultural worth there is the honoured memory of some teacher who early in his life drew from him his admiration and reverence, and by so doing, set him on the path of self-development. This memory is great asset in life and can only come to the student who is willing to accept the teacher's direction. The worship of the *Guru* is one of the first elements of discipline. The unquestioning acceptance of *Guru's* authority is, therefore, demanded not for the sake of the *Guru*. It is for the sake of *Shishya* himself.

No student can make any progress in developing his faculties unless his teacher comes to

'indwell' him. The place of 'indwelling' in creative education must be properly understood. No personality, much less the personality of a young man, can grow in isolation.

Nothing develops personality as this influence of another personality, may be of a father, a teacher, a friend or a beloved. The stronger this personality, the greater is its potency.

Certain persons draw us out. In their presence we grow better and bigger. One word from them and we acquire strength we never had before. If such a one were with us day and night or he dwelt with us in our imagination, his inspiration would never fail us. We would then grow from strength to strength. This indwelling of a great personality becomes a powerful force making us more and more of 'ourselves'.

When we are near a great personality, we not only hear him speak of men and things but also note those chance remarks which let us into to secrets. We are then possessed by it. It haunts us when we leave him. Our word and deed unconsciously come to be tested on the touchstone of his personality. We are influenced not so much by what he says but by what he is.

We are all familiar with the conscious indwelling of our favourite authors. Dumas and

Hugo were my favourite authors when I was young. I read and re-read their works. Their characters were more to me than my friends and relatives. I unconsciously adopted their attitudes and verbal tricks. I grew through these masters indwelling in me. If one abiding in us is living, the influence is still more remarkable.

A teacher will 'indwell' the student only when he develops humility towards him. Humility as a virtue has been at a discount in this noisy, jostling modern world. The more ignorant we are, the more arrogant we become. And in this age of propaganda it is easy to accept half-truths as the last word in wisdom and thus shut the door to humility.

The student, if he wants to grow, must keep his mind open to ideas, new outlook, new doctrines. He is not the leader of today, but of tomorrow. The dogmas of his college days are sure to be out of date by the time he enters life. His first duty is, therefore, to refuse to accept readymade views but humbly to develop a spirit of inquiry.

Nothing is a sure sign of moral decadence than the waves of collective insanity which have been sweeping over millions in the world during the last twenty years. To search for truth, to live up to the truth as one finds it, to

be ready to die for it, is the only characteristic of greatness. To accept what is fashionable in our social set or in politics, in social or religious matters, to be carried away by the prevalent epidemic of slogans is to deny to human personality the dignity and independence which is not only the basis of democracy but of every thing noble and free.

The student must therefore find the truth for himself. In his formative period he should refrain from accepting slogans, however tempting or fashionable. He must develop a spirit of enquiry. He must acquire the habit of comparing values. He must rise superior to being the blind instrument of passion, however great may be the cause which the passion is supposed to represent.

A student who tries to be a book-worm or a logical machine will scarcely learn the art of self-sculpture. The growing faculties of a young man can best be trained by expressing themselves indeed. Action, in the beginning has naturally to take the shape of participating in the life of the institution in which he studies.

An educational institution has a soul. Around it grow the sweet memories of a student's early hopes and struggles. It is a little world by itself, and can make or mar his future. If a student participates in its corpo-

rate life, the institution will exercise through his life the same influence which the English Public Schools and Universities exercise over Britishers all over the world and make of them the great nation that they are. For a student, service of the institution is the first step towards the greater service to which he will be called in life.

The student has also to absorb the great traditions, the lofty examples and the noble achievements which go to make up the nation's heritage which is his. At the same time he has to translate the spirit of service by doing something effective for the Motherland and her culture. Unfortunately, our students become too self-centred or too much involved in agitational activities. Shouting slogans, waving flags, mass coercion of harmless citizens, as is *hartals*, or, even for the matter of that, courting jail by itself is not service.

Courting jail is a great discipline. But for a student, going to jail, like going to war, becomes a duty only when the Nation, at the call of its leaders, embarks on a campaign of disciplined resistance. Then only it is a part of an intensive training for higher national service. A distinction, therefore, should be made between national resistance which is service and what are mere outbursts of mass action. In the latter, only the students' ignorance and sense of service are exploited by others for party ends.

True service, apart from great national crisis where the student must render every assistance, is to bring sunshine in whatever sphere he moves. It is as great a service as any man can render. An ailing sister in the house ; a lonely mother who needs company ; an unfortunate neighbour who needs aid ; a passerby who is in distress ; a victim of crime as you go along the street ; some unfortunate who is being sacrificed at the altar of a social, economic or communal evil ; a riot where the innocent requires protection even at the cost of life ; a city without sweepers which wants volunteers for scavenging ; a great occasion to be organised which needs service ; a village needing education for social welfare ; a night-class where the poor have to be taught ; these are spheres of service in which every student can bring not only help but sunshine.

To be able to cheer up others, to entertain people in their moments of depression ; to radiate the sunshine of strength, joy or inspiration to those who come in contact with you ; these are services of the higher order. They are not easy modes of service by any means. The student will have to prepare himself for this kind of service as seriously as for an examination. It will demand a sympathetic insight into human nature, a mastery over cheering conversation and a sunny temperament.

The greatest service that the student can render is by assimilating our culture and spreading it wherever he goes. The nightmare of inferiority complex which has settled on this land has to be lifted. The student has therefore to be a radiating centre of what is best in our culture. His love of things Indian can be infectious. Pride in his country's past can raise those whom he comes in contact with. His bold and courageous national attitude can create ever-widening circle of strength, not only in this country but outside. He can live, move and have his being as a dynamo working for the freedom and greatness of the Mother.

But before he can do so he will have to build his strength on the Rock of Ages, the fundamentals of Aryan Culture.

XI

THE SUPREME ART OF LIFE

What is the ultimate end of Creative Education ? What does it want to achieve ?

Let me summarise. Creative Education is the art of self sculpture. Therefore, formative education is the only real education. The programme of such an education has now been sketched.

The student must have faith in the Motherland . He must be trained to appreciate the permanent values of our Culture and try to live upto them.

Of such a training, the primary aim must be the development :—

Of the personality of the student ;

Of an all-sided responsiveness to human relations ; and

Of an urge to find self-fulfilment.

Of any programme of creative education for India :—

The first step is the study of Sanskrit ;

The second, is to view Indian Culture as an unbroken process ;

The third, is to develop the powers of expression by a study of literary masterpieces and the recurring recital of a great work, preferably one which as a scripture has an universal appeal.

The technique of such an education must involve the adoption of the *guru* and the *Shishya* attitude by the teacher and the taught.

A student is to start sculpturing himself; he is to absorb the best in Indian culture. But what is to be the life-pattern on which the artist is to mould and shape and chisel his life-energy? What is to be the ideal of benefaction in this case, the highest self-fulfilment at which he has to aim?

The art of Creative life-energy as already stated is so to self-sculpture oneself as to attain the progressive integration of his personality, leading ultimately to its Absolute Integration.

This Absolute Integration of the human personality has been called by different names. Kaivalya, Moksha, Nirvana, Samsiddhi, and Matsamsthana, in Sanskrit; *Tana*, *Wasl*, and *Fana* in Arabic; Perfection and Union with God in English. But when analysed the substance is the same in all cases.

This Absolute Integration of the human personality is not a matter of religion, rituals or beliefs. It appears as a constant factor in

all religions. It accompanies varying rituals and beliefs. But these are mere crusts; the reality is Integration. Again, it has nothing to do with the caste system, for when the Integration is established all distinctions of race and creed and sex and genus disappear. It has nothing to do with heaven or hell or other births or next worlds. It is achieved in this life, with this body, and in the daily affairs of life.

Absolute Integration lies in a man developing a dynamic personality so that all limitations disappear from this individual nature. Personality so developed reaches out to Divine proportions, and becomes the effective instrument of a Force of illimitable Perfection.

This Art is not found in India only. Individuals cultivated it in all lands and ages. Zoraster and Marcus Aurelius, Confucius, Socrates and Christ, St. Augustine, Husain-bin-Mansoor Al Hatlaj, Thomas a Kempis are but a few of the many masters of the art. But in India, the art was perfected. Here, it produced a way of life, a magnificent literature, a resultant social system, persisting habits and traditions. Here, it was woven into the life of the millions for countless centuries, raising them above material existence into a higher, more beautiful and wider life of the spirit. Here, in consequence, men have placed a higher value

on the mastery of the force of the intellect and spirit. Here they have vindicated the dignity of men by conquering from within rather than from without.

Its technique is distinctly Indian, systematized, perfected and practised on a vast scale in India. This art, however, is not parochial, sectarian, nor even national. It is a world possession.

As a technique of self-perfection, as the only pathway to self-fulfilment possible to man, it has no necessary connection with religion.

The basis of this art is the faith that a man by self-sculpture and by it alone can be Perfect. Without this faith the art cannot be successfully cultivated.

Without faith in the Perfection of his pattern, no sculptor can carve even a semblance of it in stone. Similarly, bringing the dispersive activities of the mind and the body under one guiding principle which integration of personality involves, is not possible till there is a ceaseless yearning to reach out to Perfection. This ideal cannot be understood by intellect. Quivering emotion and a powerful effort of the imagination founded on faith, these only can give the artist the vision of Perfection which leads to a higher stage of self-fulfilment.

Perfection cannot remain an idea ; it must

be made a vivid, living force before the artist succeeds in sculpturing himself under its inspiration. This perfection is styled "God". Often it is some human prophet, *guru* or *master*.

The westernistic mind is frightened of God. This fear must be successfully faced by everyone who wants to be an artist in self-sculpture.

This fear of believing in God was created by westernism. European Renaissance which gave birth to this materialistic Culture turned to profane philosophy and science and derided the supremacy of the supraphysical order, intellectual, moral or spiritual.

As a result, it reduced knowledge to its lowest physical order, empirical and analytical. It thought of life not in terms of an internal co-ordination but only in terms of ceaseless restlessness inspired by greed and lust and fear and hate either personal or collective. It taught a craving for nothing more than the satisfaction of need inherent in the material side of a man's nature. Its goal was not to reduce life to a harmony but to live it in fragments, thus dispersing personality into a multitude of contradictory facets.

Life to most of us in the modern world is either a bewildering struggle or a soulless acquiescence. But if we want to pursue the art of self-sculpture we must not be frightened

by the bogey of negation. The faculty which Arjuna had of being filled with wonderment, of his body being thrilled with awe, of his soul being enriched by humility before the Grandeur that was God, must be cultivated. Nothing else will lend the grace which makes for self-fulfilment.

To a man claiming to be modern all talk about God is just a bore. He is willing to substitute for it some ruthless super-gangster, some national hero, some devoted friend or a lady love. He is willing to reduce his art to making crude clay models. He feels freer and easier without a super model, God. Like most amusing and intelligent people whom we meet in society he is not interested in anything so incapable of being sipped or danced with or betted on as God.

Such men are really afraid of God. If they do not believe in God they should have the intellectual honesty to try to bring Him into their life. If I have doubts whether my fan is working or not, I do not simply shut my eyes. I press the button to see if the fan works. I should like them to try God in a similar fashion. If He does not exist, it will not hurt them. If He does, well, they would have discovered a fresh outlook on life which they will share with all the great ones on earth.

It is very easy to try God if you have the will. All that you have to do is to sit down quietly and alone, take your mind off your normal activities, and press the button: Frankly sincerely and humbly ask what God wants you to do. The reply will come. Obey the mandate next day, or, at any rate, try to ask again. Do this for a few days regularly. God will come into your life.

Anyway it will be a first great stride in self-sculpture ; a great steadying and inspiring performance.

Till God comes once again in the life of modern man, the world would not be saved.